# Report of the Excise Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay, 1922-23

Volume II

BOMBAY
PRINTED AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRESS
Copies obtainable from the Superintendent of Government Printing and Stationery, Bombay, Poona, and from all Agents for the Sale of Government Publications
1923
Price Rs. 5 As. 3

## OFFICIAL AGENTS FOR THE SALE OF INDIAN OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS.

### IN EUROPE.

CONSTABLE & Co., 10, Orange Street, Leicester Square, W.C., London.
GRINDLAY & Co., 54, Parliament Street, S.W., London.
HENRY S. KING & Co., 65, Cornhill, E.C., London.
P. S. KING & SON, 2 & 4, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W., London.
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & Co., Ltd., 68-74, Carter Lane, E.C., and 39, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.
B. QUARITCH, 11, Grafton Street, New Bond Street, W., London.
W. THACKER & Co., 2, Creed Lane, London, E.C.
LUZAC & Co., 46, Great Russel Street, London, W.C.
B. H. BLACKWELL, 50 & 51, Broad Street, Oxford.
DEIGHTON BELL & Co., Limited, Cambridge.
T. FISHER UNWIN, Limited, 1, Adelphi Terrace, London, W.C.
WHELDON & WESLEY, Limited, 2, 3 & 4, Arthur Street, New Oxford Street, London, W.C. 2.
EAST & WEST, Ltd., 3, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1.
ERNEST LEROUX, 28, Rue Bonaparte, Paris.
MARTINUS NIJHOFF, The Hague.
OTTO HARRASSOWITZ, Leipzig.
FRIEDLANDER AND SOHN, Berlin.

### IN INDIA.

HIGGINBOTHAM & Co., Madras.
V. KALYANARAMA IYER & Co., Madras.
P. R. RAMA IYER & Co., Madras.
THACKER, SPINK & Co., Calcutta.
W. NEWMAN & Co., Calcutta.
S. K. LAHIRI & Co., Calcutta.
R. CAMBRAY & Co., Calcutta.
THE ASSOCIATION PRESS, Calcutta.
THACKER & Co., Limited, Bombay.
SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRINTING AND STATIONERY, Poona.
D. B. TARAPOREVALA, SONS & Co., Bombay.
GOPAL NARAYEN & Co., Booksellers, etc., Bombay.
Mrs. RADHABAI ATMARAM SAGOON, Bookseller, etc., Bombay.
RAMCHANDRA GOVIND & SON, Booksellers, etc., Bombay.
BOMBAY TRACT AND BOOK SOCIETY, Bombay.
N. B. MATHUR, N. K. H. Press, Allahabad.
MANAGER, THE "HITAVADA," Nagpur.
MANAGER, NYAYASHRAYA PRESS, Poona.
RAMA KRISHNA & SONS, Lahore.
SUNDAR PANDURANG (RAMNATH SUNDAR, the Successor), Bombay
MANAGER, NEW KITABKHANA, Poona.
KARSANDAS NARANDAS & SONS, Surat.
N. M. TRIPATHI & Co., Booksellers, etc., Bombay.
MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS, Bookseller, etc., Surat.
KING & Co., Bombay.
MANAGER, SHRI SANKAR KARNATAKA PUSTAKA BHANDARA, Dharwar.*
MANAGER, BUTTERWORTH & Co., Ltd., Booksellers, Calcutta.
MANAGER, INDIAN BOOK DEPOT, Bombay.
THE OXFORD BOOK AND STATIONERY COMPANY, Delhi.
THE STANDARD BOOKSTALL, Karachi.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.

* For the sale of official Kanarese publications in the Belgaum, Dharwar, Bijapur and Kanara districts.

Digitized with financial assistance from
Government of Maharashtra
on 01 February, 2020

# Report of the Excise Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay, 1922-23

108967

Volume II

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

00108967

C x 9 47

BOMBAY
PRINTED AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRESS
1923

## BOMBAY WITNESSES.

### No. 1.

### REPLIES OF MR. DHANJIBHAI DORABJI GILDER, HONORARY SECRETARY, THE BOMBAY TEMPERANCE COUNCIL.

1. (*a*) By profession I have been a school-master all my life.

(*b*) As a member of the Indian Temperance Association and subsequently as a member of the International Order of Good Templars, which I joined in 1888, I began to take interest in the question as it affected mankind in general, and to study it from various points of view—economic, medical, religious, etc. My subsequent appointment as Secretary to the Association led me to study the question as it affected the people of this country in general and of this Presidency in particular. As originator of the Bombay Temperance Council and the All-India Temperance Conference, and as Secretary to both the bodies, I had to enter into correspondence with Government and the local Excise officials, and this gave me occasion to study and watch the policy laid down by the Secretary of State, the Government of India and the Bombay Government. In the course of my duties as Secretary, I visited a number of chawls inhabited by the working classes and the so-called untouchables; I also visited some opium-dens, once in company with the late Right Hon'ble Mr. Samuel Smith, P. C., and Sir Bhalchandra Krishna. My conclusions on this subject have therefore been based upon my studies and my observations on such occasions as well as in the world around me.

2. (*a*) There is a great deal to be said for the policy of the Government of India, as laid down in their Resolution, Finance Department, No. 5001 of the 7th September, 1905. It is merely an echo and reiteration of that laid down so far back as 1889 and 1890 after the House of Commons had passed on the 30th April 1889 a Resolution, which was regarded by the Government as a vote of censure on their excise policy. However, when Government say in their later announcement that they have "no desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation, and it is necessary in their opinion to make due provision for the needs of such persons," they are going back upon their policy enunciated in letter No. 2455-S. R. of the 21st April 1904 wherein they state, "It should be made clear that the Government is on the side of abstinence." The word *abstinence* is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as "refraining *from* any pleasure, or absolute in sense of continence, fasting or usually *total abstinence*, going without alcohol". One fails to understand how Government can claim to be on the side of abstinence, if they think it necessary to make what they call "due provision" for the so-called needs of moderate drinkers. It is for Government to reconcile these two contrary expressions of policy in any way they like. Even the later statement of their policy is welcome in so far as it (*1*) admits that "all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated" to the furtherance of the policy of minimising temptation to those who do not drink, and discouraging excess among those who do, and (*2*) desires "to conform as far as is reasonable to public opinion," though the modification "as far as is reasonable" entirely neutralises the little good there is in it. Even half-hearted as it is, this policy would go a long way to benefit the people, were the local excise authorities careful to carry it out in its true spirit.

(*b*) This leads us to the second part of the question. Our experience of the way in which it is carried out in practice is far from satisfactory. Liquor-shops are permitted to be opened not to meet any legitimate public demand for the stuff, but to supply and foster a demand created or to be created by a *protege* of the department. Instead of conforming to public opinion, they scout it. The liquor-shop at Ghoda is an instance in point. It was opened, not because the people wanted it, but in the face of actual opposition taken to it by an overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the place. Quite recently a liquor-shop has been permitted to be transferred to Mahim, not because the people wanted it, but the licensee did! This transfer has been justified on the ground that the residents in the neighbourhood did not object to it! Even the Advisory Committee was not consulted when a foreign liquor-shop was permitted to be opened at Thakurdwar in Bombay, and the licensee was a boy studying in the Matriculation Class of a local High School at the time! The conversion of the Parisian Bar on Foras Road—a questionable locality—into a Refreshment Room, with the approval of the so-called Advisory Committee, one of the members of which, not knowing that a Refreshment Room was a euphonious name for a liquor-shop, gave his assent, is another instance in point.

Let us now see whether this policy enunciated so far back as 1889-1890 has been instrumental in diminishing the consumption of spirits, country as well as foreign.

*No. of London Proof Gallons of Country Spirits issued from Central Distilleries.*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1892-93 .. .. .. .. | 20,68,652 |
| 1899-1900 .. .. .. .. | 16,19,926 |
| 1907-08 .. .. .. .. | 27,50,502 |
| 1910-11 .. .. .. .. | 27,94,201 |
| 1915-16 .. .. .. .. | 23,55,371 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. .. | 27,34,739 |
| 1918-19 .. .. .. .. | 24,92,128 |
| 1919-20 .. .. .. .. | 26,65,227 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. .. | 25,92,174 |

Now, the population of the Presidency proper in 1892-93 was 1,60,18,161 according to the census of 1891. In 1920-21, *i. e.*, at the end of March 1921 which coincides with the end of the official year, and the taking of the census, the population was 1,60,12,342 according to the final figures. Thus, while the population during this period has been stationary, with a negligible tendency to decrease, there has been an increase of over 25 per cent. in the consumption of country spirits.

The following table shows the " Sales by foreign-liquor licensees of foreign imported liquors and country spirits excised at tariff rates in the Bombay Presidency":—

| Year. | No. of Imperial Gallons of | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Fermented Liquors. Liquid gallons. | Wine. Liquid gallons. | Spirits. London proof. |
| 1892-93 .. .. .. | 2,91,752 | 60,780 | 1,58,587 |
| 1901-02 .. .. .. | 2,20,623 | 68,437 | 2,29,259 |
| 1911-12 .. .. .. | 14,14,815 | 85,363 | 3,09,871 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. | 8,55,503 | 78,283 | 3,60,170 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. | 11,44,332 | 1,03,943 | 5,61,142 |
| Increase % over 1892-93 .. .. .. | +292 per cent. | +61 per cent. | +253 per cent. |

Thus the policy cannot be said to have in any way succeeded in checking consumption.

(*c*) The plea that the consumer gets liquor of " good quality and not necessarily injurious to health," is one that can hardly be accepted as possessing great moral weight. It is not a positively reformatory measure.

3. The policy ought to be changed in the direction pointed out in answers to questions 10, 11, 12 and 13.

4. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (*c*) and (*d*) The reasons are self-evident. Briefly summarized, they may be put in the words of the *Times of India* dated the 25th May 1918 and which we cordially subscribe to.

The *Times* said :—

> " Putting all camouflage aside, there is no gainsaying the plain, blunt fact that alcohol is one of those poisons that creates a desire amongst certain individuals for itself ; it is also a poison which transfers this deadly appetite from father to son and mother to daughter .....If it was not for the existence of the gigantic trade organization built up to meet the needs of the moderate drinker, the drunkard could not obtain the poison which blights not only his life, but the lives of all who come in contact with him..... We know that the great work is to find both a substitute for alcohol, which we have in tea and coffee ; the spread of the tea drinking habit is a most encouraging sign. We know that linked with this we have to provide the proletariat with such surroundings that they are not driven to the liquor-shop as the only refuge from the sordid greyness of their daily lives. We have at the same time to insist that the goal which the state deliberately sets itself is complete and absolute prohibition of the sale of alcohol as a beverage, fully recognising that the goal is very distant, but that our immediate policy shall be framed to its ultimate attainment. The struggle for life in the future will be so intense that there will be no place in the world for societies sodden with alcohol and its awful accompaniments—immorality, lunacy, disease, crime."

Another reason for advocating total prohibition is that in India the people " are naturally abstainers," as the Right Honourable Mr. John Morley, Secretary of State for India, said in reply to the Deputation from the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association, London, that waited upon him on the 1st August 1907 headed by Lord Clwyd ( then Mr. Herbert Roberts, M.P. ). On that occasion Mr. Morley, referring to the drink traffic, expressed himself " anxious to prevent the spread of this dire new additional plague."

As to the steps, we would draw the attention of the Committee to the 12 suggestions made by the Bombay Temperance Council in their memorial dated the 23rd July 1921 to the Hon'ble the Excise Minister, as also to answers to questions nos. 10, 11, 12 and 13 below.

5. (*a*) If the reduction in the manufacture and sale of this stuff were spread over several years, say, 10 at the most, people will be gradually weaned from the habit, and will be amenable to the change. There need not therefore be any fear of illicit manufacture to a great extent. Besides, popular sentiment being against it, very few will venture to go against the tide.

(*b*) The good offices of Indian States will be readily secured if the final extinction of the traffic be the object. If the Government of India could prevail upon them to hand over criminals and civil debtors that used to take refuge there up to a recent date, there is no doubt that if Government sincerely wish to enforce pohibition within the boundaries of British India, the

Indian States will cordially fall in with the views of the imperial Government. Besides, a shopless three-mile zone on either frontier may be arranged till complete prohibition comes into effect.

(*c*) If practices such as sati and infanticide have been successfully put a stop to, there is no reason to fear discontent from certain classes of the people, if the policy of prohibition be rigorously enforced. There may be some discontent, as there always is when some new law is to be framed, for it does not meet with universal approbation—there are always interested parties and others who feel aggrieved.

(*d*) Since an overwhelming majority of the people by religious traditions and age-long habits are in favour of total abstinence, the supposition that a microscopic minority will violate the law, should not deter Government from the path of righteousness. It is sometimes the light nature of the punishment that makes people defy the risk of detection. If the punishment be light, evil disposed persons are ready to violate the law; but they will think twice if the punishment be heavy, as in the United States of America where a hotel-keeper was fined by Federal Judge Landis of Chicago the sum of 20,000 dollars, and was given a prison term of 30 months. In another instance, a man was given six months and was fined 10,000 dollars.

(*e*) If all drugs also be simultaneously prohibited, there will be hardly any chance for a person to take to such drugs. Besides, the experience gained in different Indian povinces does not support the apprehension.

6. We agree to that opinion. Popular sentiment created by moral suasion, religious instinct and legal enactments will certainly have a beneficial effect upon future generations.

7. Besides legal enactments, there should be—

(*a*) Moral suasion, by public meetings, open air lectures, distribution of literature, posters, etc.

(*b*) temperance teaching in schools.

8. Yes, prohibition should apply to all liquors, except *fresh tari*, which should be made available to the public. For this purpose every facility should be given to shop-keepers. The hours of sale at *tari* shops should be from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. Hot *tari* only should be permitted to be sold in the evening, say from 6 to 8 p.m.

*Tari* is regarded by the people as food, and has been acknowledged as such in Government reports. The Bombay Abkari Commission of 1885 speak of *tari* as "The national beverage, which by all accounts is not in any way demoralising, but wholesome and invigorating." Major Bedford in his Report on Alcoholic Liquors in India says that "Toddies on an average have the least alcoholic strength and the highest nutritive value."

The Government of India in their Resolution No. 5001 of the 7th September 1905 say, "It should be carefully borne in mind that so far as present information goes, *tari* is the least noxious of all forms of alcohol in common use in India."

The Government of Bombay have admitted that "Pure, fresh toddy is not an intoxicant."

The Abkari Commissioner in his letter of the 17th June 1904 to the President of the Bombay Temperance Council said "Raw toddy is generally considered to be a wholesome and refreshing drink".

As regards the food value of *tari* the Committee are respectfully referred to the various Bombay Excise Reports, especially those for 1879-80, 1887-88, 1896-97, 1899-1900, and 1900-1901.

9. We are for total prohibition, so this question does not concern us.

10. We are glad to notice that the Bombay Excise authorities have adopted to a certain extent one of the suggestions made in our letter of the 23rd July 1921 to the Honourable the Minister in charge of Excise, in the direction of total prohibition, *viz.*, the gradual reduction in the sale of country spirits, and we sincerely thank the Minister for the same.

(*a*) With regard to the rationing of shops the rule must apply to the sale of foreign liquors as well; otherwise people will be driven to the use of foreign liquor as was admitted by witnesses including liquor-shop keepers who appeared before the Foreign Liquor Committee of 1908-09.

(*b*) Increase in the price of liquor no doubt has some effect towards checking consumption, but it is not permanent and does not always succeed. Letter no. 8992 of the 2nd October 1913 from the Government of Bombay to the Government of India bears out this statement. In answer to question 2 we have given figures of consumption which show that though the price of liquor has been greatly increased since 1892-93, the consumption has not fallen, but has increased 25 per cent., though the population has been stationary. Besides if the increase in the price of country liquor be great, the consumers will be driven to foreign liquors.

(*c*) Reduction in the number of shops will have a beneficial effect in rural areas, not in urban. If a few liquor shops, for instance, in Bombay be closed in certain wards of the city, the licensees of the remaining shops will be benefitted without any good being done to the people in general. If the reduction of shops is to be tried in a city, let all the shops in a whole ward, say, C, E or F, in Bombay be entirely closed. We are, however, doubtful of the success of even this experiment in a city like Bombay.

(*d*) With regard to reducing days and hours of sale we are of opinion that all shops for the sale of intoxicating beverages, country or foreign, and drugs should be closed on Sundays, on fair and market days, and important holidays like Christmas, Easter, Holi, Divali, Mohorum, Ganpati and other festivals, pay days in mills, and days to be determined by the local Advisory Committees. At present a general reduction of one hour should take effect throughout the whole Presidency. The hours of sale should continue to be reduced till the closing hour is brought down to sun-set all the year round as was the former practice.

(*e*) Reducing the strength of liquor is also a step in the right direction; if, however, it be carried to excess people especially in cities who have been accustomed to more ardent spirits will naturally resort to foreign stuff.

(*f*) With regard to the location of shops the Government of India in their circular letter of the 18th July 1889 recommend the procedure adopted in Bengal. Further, the Government of India in their letter no. 2455-S. R., dated the 21st April 1904, consider that "the location of existing shops should be periodically examined with a view to ascertain whether it conforms to the rules in respect of sites, and that it should be laid down as a general rule that an established shop must not be allowed to remain on a site which would not be permissible for the location of a new shop." The Government of Bombay in their letter to the Government of India no. 3109 of the 14th April 1905 agree to the views of the Central Government. If, however, a scrutiny of liquor shops in Bombay be made, many shops would cease to exist.

(*g*) The importation and sale of all kinds of foreign liquor ought also to be similarly reduced in proportion until the trade in that stuff automatically ceases to exist.

(*h*) Temporary licensees at sports and other gatherings, as also those at private clubs, places of amusement, railway refreshment rooms and dining-cars, should be forthwith prohibited.

(*i*) With regard to the age limit for customers of liquor, the same should be raised to 21.

(*j*) With regard to subsidising Temperance Societies, is there not a danger of some over-zealous Abkari official taunting such associations with receiving such help when they press for further regulation, as the Hon. Mr. S. R. Arthur did at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 21st March 1918, when he said, "I have not observed any violent reluctance to take advantage of an increased Excise revenue for popular public purposes"? If Government are really on the side of total abstinence, as they have so frequently declared, let them engage temperance preachers and take up a positive temperance attitude, and act on the lines which are now taken by a large number of English municipalities. It will be the logical outcome of their declared policy. And seeing that consumption of drink is held by medical opinion not to be merely inefficacious as a prophylactic against plague and other diseases but positively harmful we have no hesitation in urging that the people should be warned against the danger by Government. Major Bedford in his Report on Alcoholic Liquors in India supports the foregoing contentions and says, "this is a specially pernicious popular delusion, for over-indulgence in alcohol markedly tends to lower the individual's resistance to all these (cholera, plague and malaria), in common with other acute and specific diseases." The Temperance Societies will no doubt be willing to co-operate with Government to the best of their abilities in this direction.

The Government of India in their circular letter No. 1766-1783-81 of the 18th March 1914 bring to the notice of all local Governments a suggestion recommending the application of provincial revenues to the provision of counter-attractions to intemperance as recommended by a deputation that waited on His Excellency the Viceroy in 1913. The Bombay Temperance Council respectfully ask the Committee whether it would not be much better if there were no public houses to counteract, and whether there be any virtue or statesmanship in the licensing by law of houses which good citizens find it necessary to counteract.

(*k*) So long as foreign liquor can be removed in any quantity from one place to another by a purchaser, any attempt to restrict or prohibit the removal of country liquor from shops will not have any tangible effect.

With regard to the query in the last para. of this question we would suggest that the licensing and revenue functions ought to be separated. The Government of India in their Despatch no. 29 of the 4th February 1890 state, "It will be admitted that among the legitimate objects of a system of Excise are included the raising of revenue and the regulation of the trade in liquor for police purposes." If as admitted above the regulation of the "Trade" be intended for police purposes, there is no reason why the licensing function which pertains to "police purposes" should not be separated from that of raising revenue.

Another point on which we would lay very great emphasis is the compulsory introduction of scientific temperance teaching in schools. The Government of India in their circular letter no. 730-37 of the 12th September 1907 wish to "deal with the subject of intemperance in a few sensible lessons in the sanctioned Readers.". In the Bombay Presidency in 1910, *i. e.*, three years after the date of the above letter we had seven graded Vernacular Readers, containing 577 lessons or thereabouts; and in the whole series we had only one lesson, namely, no. 31 in the 7th book which treated of intoxicants, but there were not a dozen lines in all on their evils. In the 5th book there was only one short sentence which might be literally translated, "One should not use liquors and other intoxicating beverages even in his dreams." H. E. the Viceroy in

reply to the Indian Temperance Deputation in 1913, speaking on behalf of the local Governments, said that they had "kept this suggestion steadily in mind." The Secretary of State in his Despatch no. 77 Rev. of the 29th May 1914 said "I would venture to suggest that the syllabus of lessons on temperance, which received the support of the British Medical Association, and was issued by the Board of Education in 1909, a copy of which is appended to this despatch, might be adapted for use in schools in India; and that at least two or three lessons a year in those schools should be based upon it." It appears from the answer to a question on the subject at a meeting of the Bombay Legislative Council held on the 7th July 1919, *i. e.*, five years after the Secretary of State's instructions, that since the 1st of April 1913 five editions of the Gujarati 5th book, four editions of the 6th book and three of the 7th had been printed, and yet the Government of Bombay could find room for one lesson (lesson 8) in the Gujarati 5th book in the year 1917, and one lesson in each of the 6th and 7th books (lessons 11 and 31 respectively) in the year 1918. In other words the Government of Bombay took eleven years to introduce as many as three lessons in the Vernacular Readers. Who will now deny that they are on the side of abstinence?

Scientific temperance teaching was made universal in the United States of America by virtue of the National Temperance Education Law passed in 1886 and we saw the result in the total prohibition of the traffic in 1920 in that vast continent.

Finally, we would add that the Bengal rule should be properly carried out.

No new licenses should be given or no transfer permitted to be made without a proper local public inquiry. On this subject the attention of the Committee is respectfully drawn to our answer to question no. 13.

11 and 12. The points suggested by these two questions overlap one another so much that they lend themselves to one answer. If one admit the fact of the wrong done to individuals and to localities where the liquor traffic exists, one will also admit the right of the people to self-protection against the wrong by the possession of a power to prevent its cause. The principle of local option is based upon the above right. The legal power of restraining the issue or renewal of licenses for the sale of intoxicating liquors should undoubtedly be placed in the hands of the persons most deeply interested and affected, namely, the inhabitants themselves. How reactionary the policy adopted by Government for such purposes is, will be self-evident when we take into consideration the instructions given by Government that "Reliance should mainly be placed on personal inquiry made on the spot by a fully qualified local officer." In other words it means that "a fully qualified local officer" knows more of the wants and wishes of the people of a locality than the people themselves! He is their *ma bap*, and they, like dutiful children, must swallow any pill he likes to give them, whether they like it or no. Lord Morley who is known to have even sacrificed a parliamentary seat in the cause of local option many years ago said as Secretary of State to a Deputation, "I have always held that doctrine very strongly and I hold it now; and though I think there are a great many English ideas that cannot well or wisely be transported to India, this certainly is an idea that I hope will take root there." Even so far back as the 18th July 1889, the Secretary of State wrote to the Government of India that "local and municipal opinion, when ascertained or expressed, might be allowed due weight in deciding the number and position of liquor licenses to be issued or continued in any tract or town."

If certain classes of the people have been considered advanced enough to enjoy the franchise under the new Reform Act there is no reason why the same individuals should be debarred from enjoying the privilege of local option. As for the means, we would suggest that about the time of the annual disposal of licenses 20 per cent. of the voters in the area must present to the proper officer a requisition demanding a poll. No resolution can be enforced unless at least 25 per cent. of the registered voters have gone to the polls. Sixty per cent. of the votes actually registered at the time should be deemed sufficient for a no-license resolution, and a bare majority for the limiting resolution. In the case of a transfer or the opening of a new shop in the course of the year a bare majority of members of the Advisory Committee should be a guide in determining whether the license should be granted or not. There are several other details to be taken into consideration, such as the interval between the voting and the closing of the shop, etc. In order to avoid all this cumbersome process and simplify matters, we would suggest that advantage be taken of the machinery that already exists in the form of Advisory Committees by adding to their powers and privileges, some of which are pointed out in our answer to question no. 13.

13. The Advisory Committees as constituted at present are nothing if not farcical, as so aptly described by Sir Dinshaw Wacha in his blunt, out-spoken language. They were instituted in Bombay so far back as 1908, and it is high time that their usefulness be increased by the granting of additional powers especially in the direction of determining the opening of new shops, transfer and closing of old ones and inspecting the existing ones, if they will. They ought to have the full right to decide whether a new license should be granted or not, as also an existing one should be cancelled. Their meetings like those of the Corporation should be open to the public who should have the right of presenting their views to the Committee. At present these Committees hardly ever meet face to face for an exchange of views even among themselves.

In the year 1920-21 none of the Bombay Committees met even once though they were consulted nine times in all by circulars. In the previous year out of seven consultations five were by circulars. Several times it has happened that these Committees are not consulted at all by the Excise officials and their existence is neglected. A foreign liquor license was granted in 1916 to a Parsi lad studying in the Matriculation Class of a local High School and the Advisory Committee was not consulted on the specious plea that " a license which already existed at a distance of a few yards from the old site is being regranted to a new man," conveniently forgetting to mention at the same time that the shop of the original licensee had ceased to exist and this was therefore practically a new license. When a new country liquorshop was opened at the village of Roha in the Kolaba district, " it does not appear that the Collector consulted the Advisory Committee," as the Government admitted in their reply to a question on the subject at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 7th July 1919.

Some of the directions in which the powers of the Committee may be increased are set forth in the Secretary of State's letter no. 77 of the 29th May 1914. Hemp drug and opium shops should also be brought within the purview of these Committees and we believe the Bombay Government are not averse to it. Some of the directions in which we would recommend additional powers for the Committee are the following :—

1. There should be in every case a non-official majority.

2. They should be endowed with necessary powers for giving effect to the temperance sentiments of the inhabitants.

3. As exponents of local opinion the Committees should be more frequently, systematically and uniformly consulted.

4. The Committees should be consulted with regard to all questions relating to the local administration of Excise and that no additional shops including transfers should be opened without their express sanction.

5. In the larger cities the Advisory Committees should be endowed with full and final powers of determining the number and location of all licensed premises within their respective areas.

6. Their meetings should be open to the public ; at present they have only one side of the case put before them, *viz.*, what the Abkari officials like.

14. That the evil of drink does contribute to an increase in crime and has an adverse effect on the output of work is evident from the observations made time after time at the annual meetings of the Mill Owners' Associations. Even the Industrial Conference passed a resolution to that effect in 1920. The resolution runs, " This Conference urges that in view of the great benefits to trade and industry which have already been secured by the United States of America through their prohibition of liquor and in view of the fact that the efficiency and welfare of Indian labour have greatly suffered through the liquor traffic, the Government of India should set before themselves the early adoption of the policy of total pohibition of the manufacture, import and sale of liquor in the country for purposes of beverage."

It cannot be denied that *some of the very worst effects of the liquor traffic are produced apart from such drunkenness as comes within police observation and arrest.*

15. As regards the revenue we are surprised that a question of this nature should come from the Committee when the Government themselves say that revenue is not the sole end and aim of the regulation of the traffic. The loss which the revenue would sustain either from local option or total prohibition is not an objection to which much weight should be attached. It is foreign to the interests of a country to raise revenue in such a way that its own moral and material welfare are impaired. That " righteousness exalteth a nation " is as true to-day as in the days of the Apostle. We had a proof, a marvellous proof of God helping the right in our own days and in our own country. When the opium traffic with China ceased to exist, the Government could find their way to make both ends meet in spite of what people called a tremendous loss, for we did right and God helped us. As prohibition is not to be effected all at one stroke but the traffic is to be gradually extinguished, the loss will spread over a number of years. The annual loss therefore will not cause any embarrassment on the question of revenue which will naturally adjust itself as it has done in other parts of the world where prohibition has been tried, through the increased well-being and prosperity of the people. For instance, the revenue of the small colony of Newfoundland for the calendar year 1917, when prohibition came into force, amounting to 44,42,476 dollars, was greater by 25,867 dollars than that for 1916, when liquors were still being imported. According to Secretary Houston of the United States of America, the Government's income for the first dry year exceeded its expenses for the first time in three years. This is worth consideration in view of the fact that the liquor interests there, like the Government here, contended that prohibition of the maunfacture and sale of intoxicants with the consequent cutting off of the liquor revenue would seriously cripple the Government financially. The diminution in the receipts of the Exchequer from the duties on intoxicating liquors was " contemplated with satisfaction " in Queen Victoria's speech of December 2, 1882. On the other hand, such diminution is held up here in Bombay as a bogey to frighten ill-informed people with.

16. Opium and hemp drugs should also be simultaneously prohibited. We would content ourselves with quoting what fell on the 16th March 1912 at a meeting of the Legislative Council from the lips of Lieut.-Colonel Jackson, who said " Opium, cocaine and *charas* cause infinitely more harm than alcohol."

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. GILDER replied to the President :—" My experience is restricted to the City of Bombay, and my evidence is in relation to the conditions prevalent in Bombay. So far as my information goes, prohibition has succeeded in America far beyond the most sanguine expectations of its advocates. The so-called non-success of prohibition in America is due to the difficulties arising out of a large number of foreign elements in the population of the United States. I would not like to have a loop-hole as in America to serve *bonâ fide* guests in private houses and this will be a dead letter when the stock in hand will be exhausted. I am not in favour of introducing prohibition all at once. I like to reduce the sale in such a manner that within 10 years total prohibition will be effected. I do not think that all drink can be stopped by legislative action at a stroke of the pen. I will apply this reduction in the case also of Indian Christians and Europeans. I will treat both country and foreign liquors alike so far as this annual reduction of 10 per cent. is concerned. I do not want to give any exemption as regards drinking to anyone who has come to India. The foreigners who come into this country should, to my mind, follow that well known proverb, 'In Rome be a Roman.' I want to apply total prohibition without any distinction to all communities, whether they are abstainers or not. Which law does not create discontent ? I do not believe that such a law would create permanent discontent. There might be some discontent for the first few years, but eventually this discontent will die out.

" My association has tried various means, besides the help of legal enactments, *viz.*, moral suasion by public meetings, open air and lantern lectures, distribution of literature, etc., in the City of Bombay, with the result that we have been able to convert to our views a large number of persons who were addicted to drinking. Our efforts in that direction have produced a good effect.

" I do not think any reliance can be placed upon Government permanently subsidising temperance societies to carry on their propaganda. If Government are really sincere about prohibition, why can they not do this work themselves ? The bodies to which I belong will be glad to give Government their co-operation in this direction. I do not wish to have any help from Government so far as their subsidies are concerned.

" In connection with the temperance education to be given to boys and girls, I request you to refer to the concluding portion of my reply to question no. 10:

" I will not apply my restriction of 10 per cent. to *tari*, provided one can get it fresh and unadulterated. After six or eight hours it is highly fermented and I will take objection to that sort of *tari*.

" The present hours of opening and closing liquor shops are 10-30 a.m. and 9-30 p.m. respectively in Bombay. I meant the reduction in hours of sale referred to in my written evidence to be made towards the closing rather than the opening hours, and I am sure this will have an appreciable effect on the reduction of consumption. Taking into consideration the conditions of this City, I think liquor shops should be closed, in the first instance, at 8-30 p.m. and the hour brought down gradually to 7-30 p.m. I will not make a radical change by reducing the hours of sale by 3 or 4 hours all at once. *Pari passu*, the hours of sale in foreign liquor shops should be reduced as in the case of country liquor shops, otherwise the result will be that when the country liquor shops are closed customers will be diverted from the latter to the former. No doubt, poor and middle class people cannot afford to purchase champagne or whisky, but they will buy other kinds of so-called foreign liquors, which are less costly. The habit of drinking liquor is really spreading through various clubs. I recommend that the sale of liquor at clubs should be prohibited ; they should have no license for such sale.

" I will apply the principle of local option to a city like Bombay ; please refer to paragraph 10 (*c*) of my printed evidence. Local option will be effective only to a certain degree in such a city. At present we have a sort of local option in Bombay, but it is merely a farce.

" As at present constituted, Advisory Committees are of no use. They will be of great use if they get greater statutory powers. Care should also be taken in the selection of members. One of the members of an Advisory Committee did not know whether " refreshment rooms " were places for the sale of intoxicating liquors or non-intoxicating beverages.

" I think the revenue will be affected but for a few years only ; please refer to my reply to No. 14 of the Committee's questions ."

To Mr. Madon :—" The smaller consumption of 25·92 lakhs gallons in 1920-21 when compared with that of 1910-11, *i.e.*, 27·94 lakhs of gallons, does not prove that this reduction is due to any action on the part of Government. It is due to a variety of causes as a 'sinhast' year, dislocation of trade and industries, or a bad season. As a result of economic causes, more

money is being earned by the labouring class and it is being spent on liquor. Government policy with regard to the reduction of liquor consumption has failed. Figures for the last 30 years prove this. If the majority of the people are prohibitionists, they have a right to impose their will on the minority, as liquor is a harmful thing. If meat eating lead to the same dire results on individuals and communities as alcohol does, I would prohibit the slaughtering of animals for food. People do not commit murders or other crimes or beat their wives after eating meat, as they sometimes do after taking liquor.

"To my mind taxes should be levied on luxuries. I regret the action of the Legislative Council in rejecting the proposal of a tax on cinemas."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol:—"I support local option. I wish to have total prohibition effected within ten years by means of an annual reduction of 10 per cent. and also by other means. A referendum is different from investing powers in local bodies. The present Advisory Committees have no power; I suggest that they should be representative of all shades of opinion. They should have the power to license new shops and to close or reduce the existing shops. In the United Provinces there is already a salutary change in this direction. In my opinion the extinction of drink by an annual 10 per cent. reduction is desirable. I believe the Hindu and the Mahomedan communities will not resent the prohibition of drink; nor do I think will the Parsi community do so."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"The Americans succeeded in bringing about total prohibition after educating public opinion for about 100 years. The conditions in India are different from those in America, and hence total prohibition can be effected here within 10 years. Total prohibition can be enforced at a stroke of the pen if an overwhelming majority of the people so desire. The main point is that the minds of the people must be prepared by training in the proper direction.

"*Tari* may not be liked by some individuals as a substitute for country liquor, which is more biting in taste, and to which they have been long accustomed. Fermented *tari* is injurious. After about 24 hours it becomes sour and is injurious to health.

"From the industrial point of view, I am of opinion that the prohibition of liquor will be of great service to industry; I have no doubt about it. I cannot tell you whether there should be some tax on factories which will get strong and efficient labourers in consequence of the prohibition of liquor. If it be within the province of the Government of Bombay to levy a tax on these factories, of course the Government will be benefitted by imposing such a tax."

To Dr. Patil:—"In about four hours *tari* gets fermented. In order to give an appearance of freshness to stale *tari* cow-dung ashes and other ingredients are used. In highly fermented *tari* there is about 9 to 11 per cent. of alcohol.

"The present condition of the labouring classes is as miserable as it was two years ago, the more they earn the more they spend on drink.

"I am not at all in favour of picketing whether 'peaceful', as it is called, or otherwise. The work of a picket is to dissuade people from going into a liquor shop. The picketing that was carried on in Bombay was of a most disgraceful description. The way in which they shouted out 'it is sinful to drink' created much noise and disturbed the peace and quiet of the localities. The shouts could be heard at a distance of eighty paces on either side of the liquor shop picketed. I came across only one picket, who with tears in his eyes used sincerely to appeal to persons not to enter liquor shops. I noticed a party of picketers sending away people from one liquor shop to another just opposite to it. Some non-co-operators came to me for help. I advised them to hire rooms in the vicinity of liquor shops and agreed to speak there against drink. But I refused to picket shops. In the interest of the majority we parsees won't resent total prohibition; we are not so selfish."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"*Tari* can be called fresh for about two hours after it is drawn in the morning. After that period it begins to ferment as the day advances. Alcohol is very volatile and hence warm *tari* as used by the Parsees and others is preferable to *tari* in its natural state. In my opinion, the age limit of 18 years will do, if 21 be considered too high.

"All those who have been given the right of voting under the Reform Act should be permitted to exercise that right under local option. The present practice of over-riding the opinion of the Advisory Committees should be abolished altogether.

"*Bhang, ganja* and *charas* are also harmful. They work upon the brain."

## No. 2.

### Replies of Mr. P. G. KANEKAR, Superintendent, Tata Sons Workmen's Institute, Bombay.

1. During the last three years I have been working as a welfare worker. At present I am Superintendent of the Tata Sons Workmen's Institute of the Social Service League, Bombay. My work brings me into close contact with mill-hands. Before I became a welfare worker, I was a journalist for some twelve years and took interest in the question under discussion. Besides this, I have some first-hand acquaintance with the liquor trade, having carried on the business of abkari contract for some eight months in the State of Sawantwadi after the sudden death of my uncle who was an abkari contractor there for a number of years. My father also held a license for the sale of European liquor for several years continuously. Thus, I have had opportunities to form an opinion on the question under discussion.

2. It is my humble opinion that the excise policy of Government, as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001-Exc. of the 7th September 1905, the substance of which is quoted in the list of questions sent by your Committee, has not put an effective check on intemperance. It has neither minimised temptation to those who do not drink nor discouraged excess among those who do. A high tax upon liquor has brought in revenue to Government but has not diminished drunkenness. The excise policy of Government has signally failed so far as its avowed object is concerned. The actual results of the policy have been quite the reverse of its object. And though to the furtherance of the policy Government desired in their original intentions to have " all considerations of revenue absolutely subordinated ", it has in actual practice proved to have been a mere pious wish, Government having relied on the increasing abkari revenue for its increasing expenditure and having never thought of the fact that this item of revenue was not to be relied upon as an ever present source of income and that a day might come when the loss of it would have to be boldly faced. In short, the said excise policy has landed Government in a vicious circle.

3. A change in the above policy is absolutely necessary if the moral and economic degradation caused by the spread of drunkenness has to be stopped. Simply a high tax on liquor cannot lessen to any considerable extent the consumption of liquor, unless its price is really prohibitive. The reduction of the number of shops and of the quantity of liquor sold at each shop to a sufficient extent will alone reduce the consumption of liquor. And if this policy has to be faithfully carried out Government must so adjust its annual budgets as to be ready to dispense with the abkari revenue within a stated period.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition, for, in my opinion, nothing short of such radical measure will put a stop to the evil of drunkenness. Half-hearted measures are likely to create more trouble and make the solution of the problem more difficult. With all the difficulties attending upon it the task of carrying out the policy of prohibition is not an impracticable one. Prohibition is certainly a practicable measure, if it is not to be enforced all at once, but by stages. It is quite possible to carry out the policy of prohibition, if the programme of reducing the number of shops and the quantity of liquor sold at each shop is so arranged as to reach the goal of prohibition within a fixed period, say, five years or ten at the most.

5. As regards the objections usually urged against the adoption of the prohibition policy my replies are as follows :—

(*a*) It is possible that the policy of prohibition may, for a few years in the beginning, lead to an increase in distillation of liquor by illicit means. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that illicit distillation goes on even now and that excise officers are not able to bring the offenders to book inasmuch as this illicit trade is carried on by crafty and desperate persons mostly in solitary and out of the way places. In Konkan kaju, jambul, and other fruits, and in the upcountry jawari, bajri and waste of jaggery are generally used for the illicit extraction of liquor. Palm (tad) or cocoanut trees are scarcely tapped for illicit business, it being rather impossible to tap these trees secretly. Those who carry on this trade have their own primitive methods, and crude appliances of distillation, and it is quite easy for them to destroy all traces when they are afraid of being detected. The high tax on liquor, coupled with facilities for obtaining liquor, is mainly responsible, it must be remembered, for this illicit trade, as the former renders the trade profitable, while the latter supplies it customers already addicted to the habit of drinking. Although in the beginning prohibition will lead to an increase in illicit distillation, this trade will die a natural death after some years for want of customers, inasmuch as the supply of fresh recruits to the ranks of customers will be stopped by prohibition and the number of confirmed drunkards patronising the illicit trade will thin out as years pass.

(*b*) As regards the proximity of Indian States, I think the difficulty is not so serious. So far as my information goes most of these States have framed their excise policy in

conformity with that in British territory and the scale of still-head duty and tapping fees is uniform in both. Th Indian States may be asked to follow the changes that may be effected in the excise policy in British territory. The awakening of public opinion on this question is as strong in Indian States as in British territory and for the good of the whole nation it would not be presumptious and unwise on the part of the provincial Government to ask through the Imperial Government the neighbouring big States to follow the example. As regards the proximity of Portuguese territory too, the difficulty is not a serious one. The area of Portuguese territory is very small and naturally the part of the province that may be affected through its proximity to Portuguese territory will consist of a few hundred villages. That consideration should not deter Government from adopting the policy of prohibition. When such big questions are to be tackled an allowance must be made for such loopholes. Moreover, it is essential to remember the fact that even at present the sale of liquor in villages situated on the Portuguese frontier is extremely small, as most of the people addicted to the habit of drinking cross the frontier, purchase liquor in Portuguese territory where it is sold very cheap and drink it there before returning home. The same thing will continue and it need not be feared that things would be much worse. In this connection it should be noted that recently the Portuguese Government have introduced a tax, not an inconsiderable amount to poor people, which has to be paid by every one at the time of both entering and leaving the Goa territory. This will prevent a large number of poor villagers from going every now and then to the Portuguese territory in order to satisfy their thirst for alcoholic drink.

(*c*) It is true that in certain low caste Hindu communities the use of liquor is allowed by custom at their social gatherings, but it has no religious sanction, far less is it supposed to be a part of religious performance. The number of such communities is very small and already some of them have through their *panchayets* prohibited the use of alcoholic drinks at social functions. The fear that if the present customs and habits of the remaining communities are interfered with there will be a serious discontent among them is therefore groundless. Both the Hindu and the Mahomedan religions strictly prohibit the use of liquor and the followers of these two religions cannot and will not object to prohibition by law, on religious grounds. Even in a Christian country like America the policy of prohibition was not opposed on religious grounds, and the task so far as this aspect of the question is concerned is much easier in India.

(*d*) My answer to this objection is already partly given in my answer to objection (*a*). The fear that a large preventive establishment will have to be maintained is a greatly exaggerated one. The increase in illicit distillation will not be considerable and consequently the preventive staff will not have to be considerably increased. Anyhow Government are not going to carry out the policy of prohibition at a single stroke, but by stages, and therefore a sudden rise in illicit distillation need not be anticipated.

(*e*) The probability of people taking to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs is doubtful. If at all, the increase in the consumption of these things will be quite negligible. Besides, Government will have as a logical necessity to adopt the same policy towards these intoxicating drugs, and naturally facilities for obtaining them will be curtailed.

6. The argument that, although prohibition might not be so effective in the present generation, it will have a large influence on the next deserves to be kept steadily in view. Temporary disadvantages and evils should not deter Government from adopting the policy of prohibition and the fact should not be lost sight of that the policy of prohibition would stop supply of fresh recruits to the ranks of confirmed drunkards. That policy must really be judged after some years have passed since its inauguration and not in the first few years.

7. The goal can only be reached by resorting to prohibitive legislation.

8. I would like to have the principle of prohibition applied to all liquors whether distilled or fermented. Though in a less proportion, fermentation produces deleterious effects. However, in the first stages of prohibition sale of fermented liquors may be allowed a greater latitude than that of distilled liquors. I would not object to the use of toddy when it is quite fresh, but the toddy that is sold is generally not fresh. It is kept for hours together after it is taken down from the trees, and the fermentation caused by atmospheric heat renders it more or less intoxicating. Toddy in its unadulterated and fresh form is a wholesome beverage, but it is difficult to secure its sale in that form alone. If the difficulty can be satisfactorily solved, there is no reason why the principle of prohibition should be applied to toddy.

9. I do think absolute prohibition is feasible by suitable stages.

10. As regards the means suggested to control the consumption of liquor I think that :—

(*a*) Rationing of shops and reduction in the quantity each year in the proportion fixed beforehand with a view to carrying out the policy of prohibition are necessary. This will put a check on the questionable methods resorted to by the vendors of liquor and pave the way to total prohibition.

(*b*) If the price of liquor is to be increased, it should be increasd in such a proportion as to make it nearly prohibitive or the temptation to keep up the revenue will again involve Government in a vicious circle and the time for total prohibition may be indefinitely prolonged.

(*c*) Reduction on a vast scale in the number of shops is absolutely necessary. At present things are simply scandalous in this respect. The mill area in Bombay is literally infested with liquor-shops and practically speaking liquor is brought to the very doors of mill-hands. This facility for obtaining liquor is mainly responsible for the spread of drunkenness and its attendant evils.

(*d*) On all days of religious festivals and holidays the shops should be kept closed and the present hours for sale be reduced.

(*e*) The sale of spirituous liquors of 30 or 40 degrees underproof should be prohibited and only 60 degrees underproof be allowed in the early stages of prohibition.

(*f*) The location of shops must be strictly regulated. Shops should not be allowed in the vicinity of temples, churches, mosques and other public places of worship and devotion and religious festivals, factories, workshops, docks and mills and other places where people in large numbers are employed, as well as in the neighbourhood of schools, colleges, theatres and other public places of amusement.

(*g*) Already foreign liquor finds customers even amongst the working classes and, if the policy of prohibition is to be adopted, the same principle must be applied to foreign liquor. The latter in its cheap and inferior qualities cannot be said to be less harmful than country liquor and deserves to be treated in the same way. Otherwise the object in view may be easily defeated and the foreign manufacturers of liquor will drain away money from this country.

(*h*) The sale of liquor to women and minors should be strictly prohibited.

(*i*) If Government adopts the policy of prohibition, the need for temperance work will be very little and that work may be safely left to temperance associations, social service agencies, religious bodies and other agencies. Government need not subsidise these agencies. Such subsidies are likely to be looked upon by the people as something like conscience money, if at the same time, Government is to continue to make money out of the people's drunkenness. There are, however, some other things which Government can and should do to remove the necessity which is felt by the labouring classes, of resorting to artificial stimulants. The housing question occupies the first place in this respect. When the homes are no better than pigsties the poor people, particularly those living in cities, naturally seek consolation in a cup of intoxicating drink and thus try to forget for some time their miserable lot. Government can also do much by providing places for recreation.

(*j*) The removal of liquor from shops must be prohibited. Very little good can result if it is only restricted. Such restrictions can very easily be evaded. If removal of liquor from shops is prohibited, the number of devotees of Bacchus among the higher and educated classes will be rapidly reduced. At the same time care must be taken not to make liquor-shops attractive resorts.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. Local option committees should be purely non-official and their recommendations should be faithfully carried out by the officials concerned. The municipalities and the district and taluka local boards should be asked to elect such committees, not necessarily from amongst their own members, and they may be given instructions to include in the committees the accredited leaders and religious heads of different communities. No person connected with the liquor trade should be entitled to be elected a member of such a committee. In villages the *panchayets* may be empowered to exercise option. In the early stages of prohibition the removal of such shops as recommended by local option committees should be given the first consideration in reducing the number of shops.

12. Answer to the first part of the question is given in the preceding paragraph. As regards the question of making local bodies responsible for raising any part of the revenue that may be sacrificed by the exercise of local option in their area, I think such course would be unfair and would make matters still more complicated, in consequence of which the carrying out of the policy of total prohibition might be indefinitely delayed. It would not be fair on the part of Government to hold local bodies responsible for the loss of revenue, as it was on its own initiative that Government adopted the present policy. Moreover, the methods of making up for the loss of revenue might widely differ in the case of the different local bodies and it may be rightly feared that certain classes of people, particularly those having the least voice in such matters, will have to suffer. Besides, such responsibility is likely to scare away many a local body from attempting to tackle the question. In short, it is for Government alone to shoulder the financial responsibility regarding the carrying out of the policy of prohibition.

13. There is no reason why properly constituted Advisory Committees should not prove useful in checking the evil of drink. I think, if these committees are formed on the lines

indicated in paragraph 11 in the case of local option committees, they may be helpful in expediting the inauguration of total prohibition.

14. Drink is responsbile for a large number of petty and serious crimes. It encourages rowdyism and leads to disorderly behaviour in numerous cases. The policy of prohibition is sure to bring about a considerable diminution in crime as has been proved in America and elsewhere. Even before America as a nation adopted the policy of prohibition those States which had adopted it in a more or less proportion and such areas as were free from shops and saloons showed a much less proportion of crime than the 'wet' States and areas. Those industrial colonies, which had banished drink left very little for the police to do. The connection between drink and crime is obvious and in this country too a reference to the criminal court records will establish the fact beyond doubt.

Drink is responsible for a number of industrial accidents, either directly or indirectly.

It impairs the efficiency of workers. Prohibition will increase the efficiency of workers and consequently an increase in output may be confidently expected. The Konkani mill-hands, though more intelligent than the others, have a poor physique and in addition are given to the habit of drinking. Their efficiency is steadily deteriorating and as chronic alcoholism has a very bad effect on the germ plasm it may be rightly feared that, in case the present facilities for obtaining drink continue and no check is put on the spread of drunkenness, the Konkanis after a few generations will be totally unfit for hard manual labour.

Not a few of the cases of feeble mindedness, epilepsy and other hereditary diseases can be traced to chronic alcoholism.

15. It is not, I admit, easy to answer this question. The policy of Government has created this difficulty and Government must solve it. The poor and the middle classes are already overtaxed, either directly or indirectly, and fresh taxation in any form may be legitimately resented by them. However in my opinion no sacrifice would be too great if this evil could be got rid of. I would first of all recommend merciless retrenchment. Most of the departments are top-heavy and there is still much more scope for economy in other respects. Productive Departments like Irrigation, Forest, etc., should receive more attention and such policy alone will make the question of rising revenue easier after a few years. Bankruptcy is otherwise certain. Portents are already visible and if a bold change in the right direction is not introduced disastrous consequences may ensue. Prohibition will save a good deal of the money which is at present being spent on police, jails, asylums and hospitals and will bring in more money to the Government treasury in the form of income from industrial prosperity caused by increased production, and the common people will be rendered better able to bear increased taxation whenever it would be necessary. I cannot suggest any particular source of income to make up the loss, but I would like to refer to the suggestionwhich is sometimes made in this connection that the new taxation should be directed against those classes from whom the liquor revenue is at present mostly received. The suggestion is essentially absurd, reactionary and mischievous. If the burden of the new taxation is to be borne at all, it should be borne by the whole community and not by any particular classes. The policy of Government placed temptations before the ignorant classes and revenue considerations nearly perpetuated the same policy. Now to exploit the same classes to make up the loss of revenue that may be caused by prohibition would be like trying to justify one wrong step by taking another.

16. No. I would only recommend that the same policy be applied to opium and hemp drugs as may be applied to liquor and no invidious distinction be made between them.

17. So far as my information and experience go I can say that the custom of giving opium to infants is prevalent both in Gujarat and the Deccan and also in Konkan though to a less exetent. The custom is very common in the Deccan, and even the higher Hindu castes are not quite free from it. As regards the educated communities in Bombay and Gujarat, a Parsee friend of mine once told me when we were discussing this question that some years ago it was quite common in his community to give opium to children and remarked that the same custom has not yet totally disappeared.

A creche for the children of women workers in the David Mills was opened by the Tata Sons Workmen's Institute about two years and a half back. All the young children that were brought there were found to be drugged with opium by their mothers. It was with some difficulty that the mothers could be persuaded to discontinue the practice. We have made it a point, whenever a new baby is brought for admission, to impress upon the mother's mind the desirability of avoiding the use of opium altogether. Opium is used, it appears, with the object of keeping the children quiet and also there is a superstition that it makes them healthy and strong.

It is difficult to estimate the effect of this custom on the death rate among children. It causes accidental deaths through mistakes of mothers and misadventures of children. Opium is an insidious poison and the invisible effects are more serious than visible ones. Besides, it is well known that children accustomed to doses of opium generally suffer from constipation. If any of such children happened to get diarrhœa, the case invariably proves fatal, there being no drug to stop motions stronger than opium with which the body of the child is already inoculated,

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KANEKAR replied to the President :—" I am Superintendent of the Tata Sons Workmen's Institute, Bombay. My Institute carries on welfare work in four mills and funds for the same are supplied by the Agents of those mills, Messrs. Tata Sons, Ltd.

" So long as there are temptations in the form of liquor-shops workmen will be attracted to them. I do not think temperance clubs with facilities for recreation and refreshment will have any considerable effect on the sale of liquor. They will do some little good, but it will not be much.

" I do not propose the immediate introduction of total prohibition. I would suggest that the goal of prohibition should be reached by the gradual reduction of the quantity of liquor and of the number of shops ; 10 per cent. should be reduced every year. In my opinion the maximum period during which the stages leading to total prohibition may be completed should be ten years.

" I am acquainted with the conditions in the District of Ratnagiri. There almost all communities have succumbed more or less to the temptation of drinking. They include some high caste Hindus also. I do not know anything about the Bhils, the Kolis and the Waghries. But I do know and have some experience about the Bhandaries. There are many Bhandaries who do not drink at all. It is a fact that there are certain communities who use liquor on the occasions of marriage and funerals. It is a social custom and the communities do not consider the use of liquor on such occasions as part of their religious duties. They will not excommunicate a member if he refuses to drink, and therefore it is clear that they do not look upon the use of liquor on such occasions as a religious duty.

" I know something about caste panchayats. I do not think that they will exercise any good influence in the direction of bringing about total prohibition. There are certain castes, the panchayats of which impose fines in the form of so many bottles of liquor on the offenders brought before them ; sometimes the whole panchayat consists of hard drinkers. The panchayats I would like to have given voice in the matter of local option are the panchayats formed under the Panchyats Act, and not the caste panchayats.

" I have said in my written statement that fresh toddy is not harmful. At the same time I have pointed out the difficulty of securing the sale of toddy only when it is fresh. The toddy which is sold is not free from intoxication. Stale toddy is generally sold and it is invariably adulterated with saccharin and other articles, some of them being poisonous too. I would apply prohibition to toddy also and not to distilled liquor alone. Now-a-days whisky and other foreign liquors find customers even among millhands. I cannot tell what particular brand is popular among them. But when they enter the shop they ask for liquor which is generally taken by Europeans (*sab log laite waisa*). Prohibition must be applied to foreign liquor as well as to country liquor. No communities should be given exemption though it may be claimed on their behalf that the majority of them are moderate drinkers. In the interests of the majority of the population it is necessary that they should submit to prohibition.

" I have not read much literature on prohibition in America, but my impression is that both the manufacture and the sale of liquor are prohibited in the United States.

"As regards the election of local option committees I would propose the election of members distinctly for that purpose and not that the committees should be elected by municipalities, the members of which are elected for all municipal work and not specifically to deal with the questions that are to be tackled by local option committees. These committees should be elected on a manhood suffrage basis. I think it would not be practicable to appeal to all the voters (grown up people in the locality) every time when the question of opening or closing a shop arises. Instead of such a plebiscite, it would be more convenient to form a local option committee on the widest possible franchise. In the case of taluka local option committees, members representing them will be elected from that locality.

" I think both local option committees and Advisory Committees can exist side by side. In the case of shops which are to be continued Advisory Committees may be of use in regulating the hours of sale, etc., and local option committees may consider the question of closing or removing shops in a particular area. I think both these committees are necessary. "

To the Reverend Mr. Macnicol :—" I have been doing welfare work among millhands for about three years. My institute has not tried to provide counter-attractions in the form of social clubs to prevent people from going to liquor-shops, but the sister institute called the Currimbhoy Ebrahim Workmen's Institute, which is also conducted by the Social Service League, has made an experiment in that direction. There is a temperance club, but I do not think it has succeeded in preventing any considerable number of millhands from visiting liquor-shops. Bettering housing may to some extent help in controlling the evil of drink. But so long as the liquor-shop exist the temptation will be too strong for the working classes. These shops are scattered everywhere and they occupy the best and the most prominent positions. Many new buildings in Bombay have these shops on their ground floors. It being a lucrative trade the shop-keepers can afford to pay the highest rent.

"I do not think that liquor is necessary for a labouring man. If anybody thinks so, it is simply his imagination.

"Even if Government adopt the policy of total prohibition within a fixed period, the local option committees will have sufficient work to do. In addition to the reduction in the number of shops decided upon by Government according to its settled policy, the local option committees may recommend the closing or removal of particular shops in the localities under their jurisdiction. So far as the reduction in the number of shops decided upon by Government is concerned, the local option committees will be under compulsion to carry out or submi' to that decision. Municipalities and local boards also may make recommendations for closing or removing particular shops and such shops should be given priority in the reduction scheme every year."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Illicit distillation is impossible in a city like Bombay. It is true that the more a man drinks the more craving he gets for drinking. I do not think that toddy should be considered a proper substitute for liquor during the time total prohibition is being effected. It will not do in any form, whether it be hot or lukewarm. I have not seen illicit liquor, nor have I received the opinion of one who has tasted it. I suppose the strength of illicit liquor must be 15 degrees u. p. or about that.

"Though I have said that complete prohibition should be enforced in five or ten years, I would have it enforced in five years if possible. I would welcome total prohibition if it is carried out to-day. I give five or ten years' time, not because it is desirable to delay it so long, but simply in consideration of the revenue difficulties Government have to face. The time is meant for expediency's sake. It is a fact that licences are given for opening liquor-shops even near mosques, temples, and other public places of worship and schools. I have seen such shops and also have read letters of complaint on this subject in newspapers. In good many cases liquor-shops are located near mills; in Parel one can see a number of shops quite near the mills. Recently there appeared letters of complaint regarding a shop in the Tardeo locality. I do not know the exact number of mills affected in that case. I do not believe that it would be useful if municipalities and local boards take up temperance work. I have no faith in preaching temperance so long as there are temptations in front of the labouring classes. If only a few licences are taken away it will have no appreciable effect on the evil of drink. Rationing of liquor must go hand in hand with the reduction in the number of shops.

"Liquor has a very bad effect on morals. I say this because the men who are gentle and inoffensive when sober become quarrelsome, abusive and even cruel when they are drunk.

"I cannot say whether it would be practicable in the present condition of certain communities to give women the right to vote when the majority of males consists of drunkards. Women as a class are non-drinkers and also unfortunately they have to suffer a good deal on account of their male relatives' drunkenness. Where almost all males are drunkards I think the right to vote in the matter of local option should be given to females alone."

To. Dr. Patil :—"I suppose after six hours toddy gets fermented and consequently becomes harmful. Stale toddy contains a high percentage of alcohol.

"I am in favour of prohibition through legislation."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"There is a certain number of absentees in the mills just after the pay day. There are a few workmen who do not take liquor. I cannot give the number of such men in the mills where I work. Absentism is also due to some other minor causes. A large number of millhands drink immediately after pay day and also occasionally. Those who come from the Deccan proper are less addicted to drink than the Konkanis; the latter have a poor physique. They make good soldiers and also they are more skilful as workmen. Their food is mostly starchy. They have energy to work and also power of endurance, but they are poor in their muscular strength.

"I think opium should be allowed for medicinal purposes only and doctors alone should be allowed to use it as in the case of cocaine. Opium should not be allowed to be sold in shops."

To Mr. Madon :—"Drinking carried to excess is generally termed drunkenness. No artificial measures would do so long as the shops are open.

"Last year when picketing was over, the next day there was a big rush to the liquor-shops and many people drank to excess. It was just before the pay day that picketing was withdrawn, and people having money in their pockets indulged excessively in drink. It is my general impression that drunkenness has steadily increased. If during the last ten years the consumption of liquor has been less than during the preceding ten years, it may be on account of famine in some districts, the high prices of food stuffs and some other causes. The labouring classes spend recklessly on liquor when they have money with them. There are approximately 15,000 operatives in the four mills entrusted to me for welfare work. I cannot say how many total abstainers are there among them. A drunkard is never regular and efficient in his work. Total abstainers are superior when compared to those who drink. The average monthly income of a labourer is Rs. 25 to 30. On an average he earns Re. 1 daily and spends annas 4 on drink. I say liquor is responsible for a great many crimes, because many of the assault cases occur when the

parties are under the influence of drink. Not in a few police court cases this fact comes prominently to notice and not infrequently the offenders ask for mercy on the ground that what they did was done by them while under the influence of drink."

To the President :—" No line of demarcation can be drawn between ' to drink ' and ' to be drunk '. It can rarely be found that a man can remain sober even though he drank to excess. There are some Hindu communities, a great many members of which drink for eleven months and abstain from drink in the month of Shravan. If there is Adhik Shravan still they manage to go without liquor continuously for two months. But as soon as the period of abstinence is over, they drink to excess. "

No. 3

REPLIES OF MR. S. D. SMITH, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF SALT AND EXCISE.

1. I am at present Deputy Commissioner of Salt and Excise and have been connected with the Department since 1903, first as Assistant Collector and latterly as Deputy Commissioner since 1917.

2. (*a*) I consider that the Excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001 Exc. of 7th September 1905 is a sound one, for it recognizes an undisputed physiological fact, *viz.*, man's liking for alcoholic liquor and seeks to control and keep it within proper dimensions.

(*b*) I can only speak of the actual results in this Presidency.

The policy of Government is to minimize temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess amongst those who do. All considerations of revenue are to be subordinated to these. To further this policy Government has been :—

(1) raising the tax on spirit.

(2) reducing the number of shops and

(3) improving the quality of the spirit supplied.

Although the above measures have not put a completely effective check on intemperance, still they have served to keep consumption within reasonable bounds and suppress drunkenness without interfering with the habits of the people.

3. I do not advocate any change in the above policy.

4. I am not in favour of prohibition, for I consider that a man has a right to follow his tastes, provided he does not injure himself or his neighbour or offend against the laws of the State.

I am of opinion that it will be very difficult to enforce prohibition in India because of the facilities for illicit distillation and the smuggling of spirit from foreign territory. India has an extensive coast line with foreign ports or all sides. As soon as prohibition was attempted, these ports would become bases for smuggling and even with very expensive Preventive establishments the stoppage of illicit import would not be possible. Again the Indian States which refused to accept prohibition would be convenient bases for smuggling spirit into British India. The problem of control would be fraught with grave difficulty. As under prohibition there would be no revenue from spirit, the cost of the Preventive establishments would have to come out of other revenue which, except for prohibition and the attendant Preventive establishments, could be used for education and other useful purposes.

5. As I do not favour prohibition I am not called upon to answer this question.

6. The argument is a good one if it is conceded that a succeeding generation will necessarily adhere to what has been done in the past. But history does not bear this out. It very often happens that one generation completely reverses what a past generation has done. Repression very often leads to an accumulation of forces which in the time to come upsets the law or agency causing the repression or prohibition.

7. I do not consider that the end to be aimed at is the complete cessation of consumption of alcohol, so I have nothing further to say.

8. I am opposed to prohibition, so no answer is required from me to this question.

9. I think the spread of education and knowledge and the formation of a strong public opinion against the drink habit by means of lectures, cinema, demonstrations and pamphlets would be a strong factor in controlling consumption and gradually reducing it. Workmen's clubs and places of recreation should be promoted as much as possible as a counter-attraction to the liquor shop. Many workmen go to a liquor shop after the evening's work because they have no better place to go to.

10. (*a*) The rationing of shops cannot go too far, for when the liquor gives out it will lead to the substitution of deleterious drugs and illicit liquor.

(*b*) The increase in the price of liquor has served to control consumption in the past more than any other agency. There is very little scope for further increase especially in the case of country liquor.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops is not of much use as the customer of the abolished shops goes to those that survive. Reduction of shops causes overcrowding in towns and leads to brawls, pocket-picking and other crimes.

(*d*) I am not in favour of reducing the days of sale. Reduction in the hours of sale has a good effect in so far as it prevents drunkards and other people who cannot control themselves from hanging about liquor shops. It also prevents people from going to liquor shops before commencing the day's work.

(*e*) The strength of liquor in this Presidency will now be 40 u. p. There is very little scope for further reduction. We may go to 60 u. p. as the sole strength eventually, but it may result in people being driven to drink foreign liquor and other strong drugs.

(*f*) The location of shops is a matter of some importance. Where possible I should remove them from all prominent places. In large towns the location of shops is a problem of great difficulty owing to the want of suitable premises.

(*g*) Restriction of importation to a reasonable extent would have the effect of reducing consumption but entire prohibition of importation would lead to a needless loss of revenue without producing any good effects as smuggled and illicitly distilled liquor would take the place of duty-paid liquor.

(*h*) I cannot make out what kinds of licenses are referred to.

(*i*) This is a very salutary prescription. It exists at present in all licenses.

(*j*) I do not think that any good would be done by subsidising temperance societies. The money would be better spent in forming workmen's clubs and recreation clubs.

(*k*) This restriction will lead to excessive drinking at shops and inconvenience respectable people who prefer to consume their liquor with their meals at home instead of being forced to drink it at shops amongst noisy crowds.

11. Not at present, for I find that people are not sufficiently educated to weigh the pros and cons of a case and are easily swayed by interested parties who have influence in the locality.

12. Yes. Provided the franchise is extended so that the bodies become more representative of the people than they are at present. Yes. I should certainly make them responsible for raising any revenue that is sacrificed. Responsibility prevents public bodies or individuals from taking hasty or ill-considered action.

13. The present Advisory Committees serve some useful purpose but they are not as useful as they ought to be owing to lack of interest in excise matters and paucity of attendance at meetings. I can advocate no changes.

14. Drinking to excess does contribute to an increase of crime and has its effect on the output of work, but drinking in moderation has no such effect. In the climate of India a little drink at the end of the day's work seems to set a man up for the next day's work.

15. As my recommendations do not tend to reduce the excise revenue I am not called upon to suggest other sources of income.

16. Sufficient restrictions have already been put on the use of these drugs. Charas has been prohibited from the 1st proximo. If further restrictions are placed on these drugs people will take to cocaine and other deleterious drugs. The use of opium as a drug is dying out among the rising generation. The figures of consumption are largely inflated owing to illicit export to foreign countries.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is still prevalent to a large extent especially among the working and agricultural classes. I can give no opinion about its effect on the death-rate.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. SMITH replied to the President :—"I am in charge of all the districts in the Central Division. The Bhils in the West Khandesh District are addicted to drinking and no prohibition will stop them from drinking. This is the case especially in the talukas of Navapur, Taloda, Pimpelner, Akrani and Shirpur. They also practise illicit distillation to a very great extent as they have got an abundant supply of mhowra flowers. According to the Administration Report, in 1920-21 there were 500 cases of illicit distillation in West Khandesh. The cases of illicit distillation in West Khandesh are comparatively many more than in any other district in the Central Division. In the Nasik District there is much illicit distillation in the talukas of Peint, Dindori, Kalwan, Baglan and North Malegaon, the inhabitants of which consist of a large proportion of Bhils and Kolis. In the Districts of Satara, Sholapur, Poona and Ahmednagar there is little illicit distillation. In the Konkan Districts Kolis, Agris and Kathodies belong to the drinking class. So far as Thana is concerned Bassein is known for excessive consumption of liquor. There is also considerable illicit distillation in the Jawher State as also in the talukas of Mokhada, Wada, Dahanoo and in Murbad, Kalyan and Shahpur in the Thana District: in fact everywhere in the Thana District.

"Toddy, if taken within six hours after it is drawn, is not deleterious, but if it is kept sufficiently long so as to ferment, it becomes almost as deleterious as country liquor. After two days toddy contains 10 to 12 per cent. of alcohol. In order to effect moderation in drink, I am in favour of imposing restrictions on the sale of liquor. They will effect reduction of consumption. There is no necessity of restricting licenses in the case of restaurants. I have seldom come across a case of drunkenness in a restaurant. Clubs have their own rules for preventing drunkenness and misconduct.

" I am not in favour of rationing shops and continuing the present system of reducing percentage every year as it is sure to lead to illicit distillation, smuggling of liquor from Indian States and the substitution of foreign spirit for country liquor.

" I am in favour of starting recreation clubs and tea and coffee houses in order to wean men from going to liquor shops. I am not aware of any such attempt having been made on methodical lines in Bombay.

" Ordinary villagers do not understand the pros and cons of any case and they are unable to exercise an independent opinion. They are led away by interested persons. My general impression is that members of Advisory Committees do not take any interest in their affairs. Mofussil Advisory Committees are presided over by Collectors; I am afraid, I am not in a position to say why these committees have not proved a success. I have nothing to do with Advisory Committees in my official capacity."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" It is not entirely a question of habit when I say that 'In the climate of India a little drink at the end of the day's work seems to set a man for next day's work.'

" I do not know whether now the opium habit is very common in Gujarat and Kathiawar. I left these parts 16 years ago.

" Illicit distillation has been in progress in West Khandesh for years. Unless the Abkari establishment is doubled or quadrupled, illicit distillation will not be put a stop to. In order to reduce illicit distillation, the still-head duty and retail price of liquor is reduced in some areas. Illicit distillation is still prevalent."

To Dr. Patil :—" Females do not usually go to liquor shops though they also have to work."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I consider the prohibition of liquor as an interference. I will not necessarily call it repression. Repression will lead to reaction.

" I do not think that a mill labourer, if accustomed to drink, will refrain from visiting a liquor shop even though it is kept at a distance from a mill or a factory. Mere removal of shops will not affect the percentage of consumption. The argument that shops in prominent places have more customers than those in out of the way places, does not hold good. People will go wherever they will find a shop open and have a drink. Even in the month of July (Shravan), drunkards have their drink. If this was not the case the shops would have no customers and could not keep open.

" Though there is a reduction in the sale of liquor at the '*Shimga*' festival owing to the closing of shops, there is a great rush for drink immediately after these holidays. I have no objection to close foreign and country liquor shops on the day following that on which millhands receive their pay. In any case it will have no effect because they will drink heavily after that day.

" I have no objection to close shops at 8-30 p.m. in the mofussil."

No. 4.

REPLIES OF THE MOST REVEREND ARCHBISHOP A. GOODIER, S. J., OF BOMBAY.

1. Archbishop of Bombay.—My opinions are formed chiefly upon evidence supplied by priests in charge of parishes.

2. The policy of Government is good, and seems to have some effect in towns, but in rural districts, especially in toddy and liquor growing areas, there seems to me no improvement from the raising of the tax.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition. I believe voluntary individual total prohibition is possible, and in many cases is effective.

6. It is possible that total prohibition will have a good effect on the next generation, but a better effect will come from voluntary prohibition; there is the danger of adding the more serious temptation of making drinking a forbidden fruit, which alone will have its attractions for youth.

9. and 10. I am in favour of encouraging and subsidising temperance work. Two years ago I tackled a village of Kolis in Salsette whose inhabitants were bad drinkers. I gave the children a school, in return for which the men were to form an anti-drink league. The experiment has been entirely successful.

12. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with too much power in this matter. I am afraid they use their power unfairly. It is different with leagues among the people themselves.

14. Most decidedly; the villages in which drink is common are reckless as to honesty, and are easily stirred to brutality.

17. I do not think the use of opium is prevalent among any of the people under me. The curse is country liquor, and this chiefly in villages where there is no evening amusement, or from which comes the class of coolies and bullock-drivers. These almost all take to drink.

---

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Archbishop GOODIER replied to the President :—" I have come across people living in Salsette. Generally the Portuguese are not addicted to excessive drinking. There are certain sections in the (Portuguese) Roman Catholic Christian community who are total abstainers, and there are others who are very much addicted to drink. The evil is very common among Kolis and agriculturists. Most of the Kolis are fishermen. They generally resort to both toddy and country liquor. If toddy is not available, then they take country liquor. A gentleman told me the other day that country liquor is worse than toddy. There is marked decrease in birth rate and increase in early death rate where country liquor is common. It does destruction in both ways. These people are very much addicted to drink and they will drink in any case and at any cost.

" By ' voluntary individual total prohibition ' I mean if people of a particular village can be induced to stop drinking, efforts in that direction will be successful if they will be induced to form a general opinion against drink. I visited one village, where every one was addicted to drink. When the people of that village came to me for a school I told them if they would give up the habit of drinking, I would provide a school for them. The population of that village was at that time 150 men, women and children, which consisted of Hindus and Christians.

" I do not consider that total prohibition by legislative enactment is practical under the circumstances prevailing in India. In the Deccan and other rural districts there is very little drink. It is not necessary to pass a legislative enactment to that effect so far as the Deccan and Kathiawar are concerned.

" As regards the scheme to do away with the liquor by an annual reduction of 10 per cent., I think, it does not seem probable that Government can go below a certain minimum, and if it will be the case, then the door will be wide open for illicit distillation.

" I am not in favour of investing local bodies with too much power in this respect. I am afraid, they use their power unfairly. It is different with leagues among the people themselves. I think there is likelihood of favouritism and personal influence cropping up in the rural districts if the power to control the location and number of shops were given to municipalities and local boards. The reason is that after all they are human beings and members are likely to be influenced by the interested parties, and in that case the desired end will not be achieved.

" My experience of panchyats is connected with Gujarat. Panchyats in Gujarat quarrel much among themselves at their meetings, which sometimes last from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. I know there are a good many villages in Gujarat where there is practically no drink. I am not referring to Surat District.

" I have no definite opinion to offer on the question of local option.

" In Bombay City there are clubs and restaurants where the sale of liquor is restricted They sell only a certain amount of liquor. Either they do not sell liquor at all, or if they did they sell only a certain quantity and in certain circumstances. I know some of the clubs where alcoholic drinks are not allowed to be sold."

To Mr. Madon :—" At any rate my experience is that agriculturists do not drink during the busy season. The more work they get the less they drink.

" I do not know whether the villagers of the village referred to above allowed liquor to be sold in their village."

To the Reverend Mr. Macnicol :—" As far as I know, local option means legislation. It does not come from the heart of the people, but from the rulers. So long as the temperance work is voluntary there is no objection to receiving Government subsidy which is on a par with the educational grant. In the event of prohibition being adopted Government should make an exception in the case of churches where wines are used for ceremonial purposes."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I have already said above the more the labourers have work the less they drink. They drink more during the eight months of the year they have leisure.

To Dr. Patil :—" Fishermen in Bassein are addicted to drinking. I do not know whether there are any abstainers among them."

## No. 5.

REPLIES OF COLONEL STANLEY R. EVANS, CHIEF SECRETARY, THE SALVATION ARMY.

After giving the whole matter consideration, we passed over the Questionnaire to one of our most experienced officers, and his replies are as follows :—

1. An Officer in the Salvation Army.

Have spent 35 full years in Salvation Army work in—

(*a*) Villages of central Gujarat ;

(*b*) Part of the time (six months) in the Telegu villages ;

(*c*) Two years in north India ;

(*d*) Four years in Punjab villages ;

(*e*) Four years in Rajputana villages.

Have in every case lived amongst the working population, constantly visited them in their homes, addressed them in meetings, and made temperance a special point in my work.

Could collective experience of leading officers be submitted ?

2. The common people of the villages, as I know them, are seldom confirmed drunkards. Generally they only indulge in drink at marriages, the Holi festival, and when visiting towns.

I therefore feel that prohibition would have a bad effect on so very few of the common people that the matter is scarcely worth consideration.

I do not think it would drive them to deleterious drugs, except in those very few cases where the parties were confirmed drunkards.

On the other hand, there are certain communities that have been drunkards for generations, such as the Dublas in Broach District, and the rice pounders (Golas) of Ahmedabad. It should not be very difficult to prevent illicit distillation amongst such well-known classes.

To say that the present system prevents illicit distillation is, in my opinion, a mistake, seeing that in districts like the Panch Mahals the people could distil a tremendous quantity of liquor, if they had a desire to do so, without Government being any the wiser. The fact that there are so few cases leads me to think that the danger of it being done on a large scale is not very great.

3. I cannot say if the policy is to blame, but from ordinary observation I conclude that drinking has increased tremendously. I believe local option will improve this condition of things, if given a fair chance.

4. Yes, because in the case of the individual it proves the only *bona fide* remedy. The temptation should be withdrawn. I consider it worthy of trial.

(*a*) Instruct children in all public schools concerning the evil of intoxicants.

(*b*) Provide attractive but harmless drinks, and have them sold at low prices.

(*c*) Financially assist temperance societies, and encourage them to organize more strongly. Much can be done by the Salvation Army, which is quite non-political, and is the largest temperance organization in the world.

5. Answered above.

6. I believe the argument to be sound.

7. By no means. Wise agitation against the evil, and public instruction, etc., are necessary.

8. I would put a ban upon all intoxicants as beverages.

9. If, after trial, prohibition is not found to be feasible, then every effort should be made to have the drinks prepared in such a way as to cause little or no intoxication, *i.e.*, have them made very weak.

10. If prohibition is found to be actually not feasible, I would commend all the efforts from (*a*) to (*k*). It is as practical to license the drinker as the seller. If a person had to obtain a license, the registration of the person's name would deter many. A man needs to have a license to carry a gun, lest he should prove injurious. The drunkard is injurious also.

11. Yes.

12. I consider these suggestions worthy of trial.

13. I cannot speak from experience, but believe they are. I have no suggestions to make.

14. Most certainly it does.

15. I cannot give any suggestions at present.

16. As these are dangerous poisons, I consider they should be treated as such.

17. I cannot speak from experience, but understand that some Ayahs and parents make use of it. I cannot give a definite statement, but the result must of necessity be injurious.

The foregoing also represents the viewpoint of our Organization, and if you so desire we shall be pleased to arrange for this Officer to give you the benefit of his experience.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Brigadier H. F. BURFOOT, on behalf of the Salvation Army, replied to the President :—"My name is H. F. Burfoot and my other name—every Officer of the Salvation Army in India has his Indian name—is Dayasagar.

"My experience is restricted to the Kaira, Panch Mahals and Surat Districts. I cannot say whether there is much illicit distillation in the district of Kaira. Although I lived in the Kaira villages for several years I do not remember one case of illicit distillation in those quarters in villages where I had my residence. Drinking in villages is not very common. In the Panch Mahals it is different. The Bhil community is very much addicted to drinking. It is my impression that the drinking habit is generally increasing.

"I am in favour of local option. I think the right to vote should be given both to males and females on this matter, as women are the sufferers in case their husbands are drunkards.

"By 'harmless drink' I mean 'non-intoxicating drink'.

"While I think the effect will be good if temperance associations work independently, that is, without having any subsidies from Government; the Salvation Army would not object to receiving such subsidies.

"I do not see that there is any objection to subsidising temperance associations, provided they are in close touch with the people, like the Salvation Army.

"I *do* attach practical importance to the idea of reducing the number of licenses and also liquor-shops, but in regard to the licensing or *rationing of the consumers of drink*, I think that is a measure that would only be practical in certain places, namely, where the drink habit had not a very strong hold."

To the Reverend Mr. Macnicol :—"I see scarcely any danger in subsidising temperance societies if that is to come in a general way."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"I was many years in Ahmedabad, and on my first arrival in 1887 I and those with me remarked that we saw no drunken people. Such was far from being the case now. I cannot say how many drink shops there are in Kaira. During the earlier part of my career I did not live in Ahmedabad but paid frequent visits and afterwards lived about 15 years in that city.

"I do not think it a wise policy to give the right of vote to women only in places where drunkenness is common. Both men and women may be given the power to vote.

"I am in favour of total prohibition if it be feasible. By 'feasible' I mean 'practical" that is to say, it must not upset the country.

"As I have not lived in Panch Mahals but have only paid visits to that district, I cannot say whether the Bhils living in that locality are likely or not to create trouble if drink is prohibited. I do not think the Dharalas and Kerals will create any trouble.

"In Surat District many of the common working people including the Dublas are soaked in drink. I have seen many people drunken through drinking toddy, in Surat, as well as through other liquors."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"At the time of marriage ceremonies there is generally a demand for drink. If Government will not sell drink, no one will buy.

"I do not think there will be any discontent.

"My own experience leads me to believe there is not much illicit distillation compared with the size of the population; and if the people were really anxious to practise it (illicit distillation) it would be done on a very larger scale than it now is.

"I am therefore of the opinion that if Government stopped the sale of liquor, the danger of illicit distillation would not be very great."

No. 6

REPLIES OF MR. T. A. KULKARNI, GENERAL SECRETARY, THE SOCIAL SERVICE LEAGUE, BOMBAY.

1. I am the General Secretary of the Social Service League, Bombay. Temperance movement is one of the principal activities of the League and thus I have had opportunities of forming an opinion on the questions.

2. (*a*) The policy enunciated in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, *viz.*, to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do, has not been followed in practice. Liquor-shops occupy the most prominent places in a locality and as a liquor dealer is able to give far higher rents than any other dealers can offer, most favourably situated shops are in the occupation of liquor dealers. Such a state of things is sure to increase the temptation to those who do not drink. Besides, the number of shops in certain labouring class localities and mill centres is provokingly large. They offer great temptation to those who do not drink and encourage excess among those who do. Because when workmen are returning home from work in the evening, they want something which will refresh them and drive away the mental and physical fatigue. In the absence of any healthy and recreational amusements, in the absence of open spaces where they can spend an hour or two pleasantly, in the absence also of any good accommodation at home, the favourably situated liquor-shop and, in some cases, the spacious apartments where many times liquor is served with food easily tempt a tired workman.

(*b*) It is impossible to give the actual results of the policy as it has not been carried out in practice.

3. The policy cannot be wholly condemned on the ground of principle but very often it has been found that questions of finance are likely to intervene and it becomes impossible to carry it out.

4. Yes. India is a country in which drinking is condemned by public opinion. Even in working class communities, people drink stealthily and the opinion in India is that if a man drinks, there is no knowing when his habit will go to excess. Besides, the masses are poor and almost on the verge of starvation and in case of such persons, the best method of improving the economic condition is to stop drinking entirely. The conditions in India are quite different from those in other countries, because Hinduism and Mahomedanism, the two principal religions in the land, condemn the drinking habit in very strong terms and hence total prohibition is not likely to be considered a harsh measure by a considerable portion of the populace. If total prohibition is introduced by stages, it is sure to be a successful pratical measure. If the supply of liquor is reduced by 10 per cent. every year, total prohibition can be carried out within a decade.

5. (*a*) To a certain extent the evil of illicit distillation will remain in existence as it does now.

(*b*) This evil exists even to-day and it may continue to a certain extent, but it is not as great as it is pointed out to be, because some of the Indian States can be compelled to observe total prohibition as they get their supply of liquor from the same source as in British territory, *viz.*, the Government contractors.

(*c*) The experiments of closing liquor shops during the Holi and Mohurrum holidays has been tried and no discontent or disturbance has been caused.

6. It is a sound argument and many temperance workers in India attach a great deal of importance to it.

7. Yes.

8. All liquor, whether distilled or fermented, must be prohibited. The use of fresh toddy or shindi may be allowed.

14. Criminal statistics speak of the abnormally low percentage of crimes to the total population in India. One of the causes is that several communities in India do not drink. The output of work of a teetotaller is much greater than in the case of one who drinks.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children prevails to a large extent among the working classes.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KULKARNI replied to the President:—"I have been connected with the Social Service League for the last 10 years. I have to do more work in Bombay than anywhere else. I have to do work also in the Thana and Kolaba districts. In Thana people are addicted to the evil of drinking to a very great extent. They include bhandaris, malis and the general agricultural population. These people drink more because of the fact that they earn more, owing to

the close proximity of the District to the City of Bombay. Some of the bhandaris are toddy-tappers. I do not expect any organized opposition or any great agitation from bhandaris, if drink is stopped. Recently there was a strike in the Kolaba District among agriculturists. It is said that they have been on strike for the last two years and that they have been able to hold their own on account of their being teetotallers, for if they had continued drinking they would have been brought to their knees very soon.

" The object and the policy of Government have been frustrated in the City of Bombay so far as the location of liquor-shops is concerned. The shop known as " Golpitha " has become so well-known that it has become a tramway junction. When a liquor-shop in Bombay is located in a magnificent building it naturally attracts people. The league I represent has not specifically represented the undesirability of having so many liquor-shops in Bombay, but we have passed resolutions on that subject with a view to approach Government. Drink traffic in the City of Bombay has increased to a very great extent, and it is not proportionate to the increase in population. The general position of the labourers is just the same as it was in 1914-15, but drink is increasing seriously.

" I advocate total prohibition. I do not think there is any great danger of illicit distillation. There may be some chance, but it will be negligible.

" It is generally known that after six or seven hours toddy contains a high percentage of alcohol and is harmful. I am also told that some extraneous substances are added to stale toddy to give it a fresh appearance.

" As I am in favour of total prohibition I do not wish to offer any remarks on questions 11, 12 and 13. I will not recommend anything short of total prohibition. So long as liquor is available workmen are sure to be tempted to have a drink. I think total prohibition is possible and feasible. Legislative enactment is quite necessary.

" I do not claim much knowledge about the American literature. It took 100 years to have complete total prohibition in America. But the conditions in America are different from those in India, because a good many people are teetotallers here."

To Mr. Madon :—" In the Currimbhoy Workmen's Institute various amusements, including a gymnasium, are provided for workmen. I do not know whether liquor taken with food will be less injurious, but it is sure to attract more people to the liquor-shop."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—" I am in favour of total prohibition and I do not wish to take into consideration the importance of local option."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" Mill-hands go to foreign liquor shops occasionally."

To Dr. Patil :—" Liquor-shops in magnificient buildings do attract people. To have best results, I think, liquor-shops should be closed.

" Picketing is not likely to be successful unless there are exceptionally good men to carry it out. I believe in total prohibition. Other methods in stopping drink are mere palliatives. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" We have got restaurants in the Currimbhoy Workmen's Institute. In course of time we wish to make it more attractive. There are about 10,000 workmen and mill-hands in the mills of that group. We have for them a gymnasium and several co-operative societies for the different departments of the mills."

## No. 7.

### Replies of Mr. A. S. DALAL, Acting Deputy Commissioner of Excise.

1. I am a Superintendent of Salt and Excise and am at present Officiating Deputy Commissioner of Excise. I have nearly 15 years' experience of the work of the Excise Department, most of it in the distillery branch of the Department.

2. (*a*) Undoubtedly, the policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India and its results have been considered to be satisfactory by even those very much interested in the temperance movement.

(*b*) The Department has so far carried out the instructions of the Government of India without in any way interfering with the habits of the people. Excess amongst the drinking classes has been checked by making liquor as dear as possible: (1) by the detection of offences of (*a*) illicit distillation and (*b*) illicit importation of liquor from foreign territories, (2) by reducing the strength of spirits gradually but steadily (it is now 40° u. p. and 60° u. p.), (3) by preventing minors having access to it in shops, (4) by restricting the limit of possession and transport and (5) by restricting the hours of sale at licensed shops.

This policy though it has not put an effective check upon intemperance yet it certainly has lessened it.

The liquor supplied for sale to licensed vendors has always been and is of the best quality.

3. I do not advocate any change in the policy and I have, therefore, no suggestions to make for its improvement.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition as I do not consider it a practical measure. If introduced, it would generally improve the moral and the material condition of the people to a very great extent, but its introduction is not practicable as stated above.

A courageous step has already been taken by the Government of Bombay by introducing from 1st April 1922 the rationing system in this Presidency. This ought to be welcomed by the people as under this system no more liquor will be available for sale at shops than the quantities fixed for individual shops. I, however, think that the reduction in this fixed limit of supply from time to time to shops should be very gradual and that it will be a question for consideration as to whether a line will not have to be drawn and a minimum percentage fixed for each shop.

5. (*a*) It is exceedingly difficult to stamp out illicit distillation with the limited preventive staff which the Excise Department possesses. The recent retrenchment in the expenditure on the Preventive establishment, which has had to be made, will further facilitate, the obtaining of illicit liquor and inspite of the best efforts of the remaining inadequate staff an unnecessary increase in drunkenness is likely to ensue.

(*b*) It is extremely doubtful whether the Indian States and the Portuguese Government will ever adopt prohibitive measures similar to those which are being or which will be introduced in the Presidency. If they do not, the object, with which even partial prohibition is sought to be introduced, will not be gained, with the result that the legitimate, Excise revenue of this Presidency, will be diverted to the Indian States and the Portuguese Government without any corresponding advantage morally and materially to the inhabitants of this Presidency.

(*c*) Hitherto it has been the settled policy of Government not to interfere with the habits and customs of the people. The introduction of total or even partial prohibition will, to my mind, be resented by certin classes of people as an unwarranted interference on the part of Government and cause discontent.

(*d*) The Preventive establishment as it existed some years ago was not considered adequate to deal effectively with offences against the Abkari Act. As a matter of fact, no amount of increase in the establishment will ever put a complete stop to the habits of the people to resort to illicit sources of drink, but the further reduction of the Excise staff from 1st April 1922 will, I am afraid, encourage largely illicit distillation and importation of illicit spirit with the result that people will drink spirits in larger quantities and also spirits of inferior quality and injurious to health, in the shape of smuggled liquor and illicitly distilled stuff. The further checks put on country liquor will also encourage the drinking of cheap inferior foreign liquor imported as well as those manufactured in India.

(*e*) I have heard of cases of people, who have given up drink, taking to intoxicating drugs and other drug habits which are infinitely worse than liquor. Smoking of opium, known as *chandul* and *madat* is one of the worst kinds of habits. And there is the fear of consumers turning to far more deleterious drugs, such as cocaine, morphia and *charas*.

6. There is some truth in the argument that prohibition would have a large influence on the next generation. The idea underlying this would seem to be that, if children know nothing about liquor, they will be sober all their lives. If this were so, intemperance might be stamped

out in the next generation as suggested. But I do not think that either Government or temperance societies can so influence the children of the present generation without the co-operation of the drinking parents, who will always find ways and means of obtaining liquor inspite of total prohibition. On the contrary, forbidden fruit is always more tempting than what is available without any restriction. It has also to be borne in mind that the other much worse drug habits, referred to above, which the parents may take to in the absence of liquor, may also be inherited by the next generation.

7. I give below in a rough outline a few of the methods which ought in my opinion to go towards achieving the object aimed at more or less permanently :—

(*a*) Peoples' minds should be so cultivated as to render the very idea of drink repugnant.

(*b*) Suitable lessons on temperance subjects free from dogmatic assertions should be inserted in text books and introduced in all schools for the benefit of the school-going children. These lessons should indicate in simple language the evils of the drink habit, etc., and these should be supplemented by magic lantern lectures, open to children and their elders. The magic lantern shows should not be exclusively on the drink question but should be interpersed with suitable educative slides so that along with the chief object of inculcating temperance the lecture should be generally instructive.

(*c*) People should be encouraged to open temperance clubs and organize their own magic lantern lectures open to the children and the public in as many convenient centres in towns or villages as possible.

(*d*) It has been observed that mill hands in Bombay and other mill industry centres are tempted to largely patronize the liquor shops on their way home after putting in a hard day's work. Their energies at this time being at a low ebb they are naturally tempted to take a pick-me-up in the shape of a dram. To counteract this millowners should, in their own interests, as well as those of their employees on whose welfare their dividends depend, open temperance refreshment bars where suitable food and non-alcoholic drinks should be sold at very cheap rates without any idea of profit but as only additional working expense of the mill. They should also have for each mill a sort of circulating library where their workmen should have access to vernacular books of a high moral tone. Open spaces for air and sports should be reserved where they might with interest indulge in Indian or perhaps English games. Then there should be a people's bank attached to each mill, factory or workshop, organized on a co-operative system and every encouragement should be given to ideas of thrift. The mill owners might conveniently fix upon suitable holidays to organize sports, where prizes should be given to the children of their workmen by the owners and every effort made to show to the men and their women and children that the big millowners are interested in their moral and material welfare. These occasions should be availed of to give grand picture shows where the films should be of the nature indicated in suggestion (*b*) above.

(*e*) Drinking in moderation should not be absolutely prohibited, though the educative influence indicated above should in no way be relaxed.

(*f*) Another almost sure way to wean the people from liquor is to encourage toddy drinking. Wholesome toddy at very moderate rates should be made available in large quantities. The people of Gujarat, Thana and other toddy producing districts will certainly take advantage of this first, but if toddy tree cultivation is encouraged in other centres and fresh and pure toddy made easily available, I have no doubt the indulgence in strong spirit will decrease to a great extent. Fresh or even slightly fermented toddy is harmless. It is known to have beneficial medicinal properties, as many doctors are known to advise their patients suffering from certain diseases to go to villages in Gujarat and other districts where toddy is plentiful and easily available and to drink it as much as possible. This to my mind is an aspect of the drink problem in India which requires immediate sympathetic handling at the hands of Government by the granting of as many facilities as possible to those engaged in this trade. The principal measure in this direction should be a drastic reduction in the very heavy taxation on toddy in the shape of tree tax and heavy license fees, which alone make the sale of pure wholesome toddy impossible.

(*g*) I am afraid that unless and until the people's views are brought up to the Utopean ideal state of viewing liquor with aversion, it will not be possible to introduce prohibition in this or any other Presidency. To do so would be attempting to bottle up human nature which is well nigh impossible.

(*h*) Another idea that strikes me as worthy of bringing to the notice of the Committee for consideration is this. To induce people to avoid indulgence as far as possible in strong drink, a sort of semi-temperance drink, containing say not more than about 10 per cent. alcohol, attractively coloured, and bottled (like Vermouth or other wine) should be introduced and retailed at shops side by side with the 40° u. p. and 60° u. p. spirits, or for the matter of that, it may be retailed, under proper Government control, at the refreshment bars for Indian workmen suggested in paragraph (*d*) above.

Details as to what such a drink should be and how the sharp zest (as in the case of an O. T. drink) is to be put in it by the use of innocuous things could be fixed later on if the idea is to be taken up. But it is just possible that there always must be a class of consumers who would prefer this very mild and pleasant sort of pick-me-up taken along with some cheap and wholesome food before getting home for dinner and sleep for the night. I would strongly urge an experiment of some such measure being tried. The introduction of such a mild drink may to a certain extent be the means of weaning from strong drink a few at least of the hard drinkers.

8. I should certainly not extend prohibition to any kind of liquor, whether distilled or fermented for a very long time to come, until the conditions indicated above are brought about. Till then I should certainly encourage drinking of pure shindi or toddy especially the latter for the reasons given in a paragraph 7 (*f*) above.

9. I have already indicated this in my replies given above, *vide* paragraphs 4 to 7. Healthy home influences would also certainly contribute towards the desirable end aimed at.

10. (*a*) *Vide* paragraph 4 above.

(*b*) *Vide* paragraph 2 (*b*) above.

(*c*) Reduction in shops. My experience shows that reduction in the number of shops does not give satisfactory results. The total consumption does not go down and licensed vendors of the shops which are not closed get an opportunity to exact prohibitive rates from the consumers and benefit at the expense of those whose sole means of livelihood is taken away.

(*d*) The reduction in the days and hours of sale should in my opinion be introduced with great caution as it might lead people, who take a dram or two at present at shops to take a bottle home and thus indulge in a larger quantity of drink than they would otherwise have ordinarily done, with the added evil of the drink habit extending to the other members of the family.

(*e*) I think a line requires to be drawn somewhere as to this. We have already reached a stage where we must cry a halt for at least some time to come. There is always a limit to the patience of the consumer, however needy he may be. If their feelings are not carefully watched and they are hedged in, serious discontent is bound to prevail. In this connection I should once again reiterate my proposal for the introduction of a suitable drink containing about 10 per cent. alcohol referred to in paragraph 7 (*h*) above. Any further reduction in the strength of country liquor would only make it like water and make the consumer give it up and take to inferior foreign liquor of much stronger strength. Even now the difference between the strengths of foreign liquor and country liquor is too marked and rather invidious.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops. This is a matter which needs careful consideration and might be left to an advisory committee, composed of people representing all shades of opinion in a town or village but under the circumstances obtaining at present it seems desirable that the deliberations of this committee should be guided by the Collector.

(*g*) I am decidedly of the opinion that restrictions on the importation and sale of foreign liquor should be carried out side by side with those on country liquor and that facilities similar to those enjoyed by the foreign liquor trade should be extended to those engaged in the vend of country spirits so that dealers may compete under equal conditions. Under the present state of affairs I am afraid that the total consumption of foreign and country liquor will not be less inspite of the rationing of country liquor shops.

(*h*) It is not clear as to which kinds of licenses it is intended to prohibit or regulate.

(*i*) Age limit has already been prescribed. Any further material change in this respect will create complications. For instance, it will not be difficult for a young man who is prevented from going to a shop on account of his age to obtain his supplies through his elders. Moreover, how is an illiterate or even a literate shop keeper or a licensee to know for certain the age of a customer. It will be more or less a case of guess work and the licensee or the shopkeeper will be entirely at the mercy of the prosecuting officer or the trying magistrate.

(*j*) I am not in favour of subsidising temperance associations. It is the province of the people to maintain such institutions. The money available might be usefully utilized towards printing leaflets and coloured placards indicating clearly the results of intemperance in drink. To my mind attempts to persuade the drinker to practise moderation will be more successful in achieving real temperance. If some heavy drinkers could be induced to practise moderation in the real sense of the word in course of time, some of these will become teetotallers. Even food taken to excess is injurious and at times kills the glutton.

(*k*) This is being tried in some cases and the experiment should be interesting. The only serious objection to this is that its wholesale introduction would operate as a real hardship upon that section of the drinking but respectable public who at the close of the day would prefer to have his peg or dram at home in a decent manner. Great care is necessary to see that unncessary discontent due to misunderstanding of the benevolent intentions of Government does not result. It would also be invidious in the face of the fact that any amount of foreign liquor can be removed and stocked.

I have in paragraph (*j*) above and in reply to other questions indicated fairly fully the lines on which the liquor traffic should be controlled. I firmly believe that any show of compulsion or the exercise of the least force in carrying out the laudable campaign against drink is to be deprecated and certainly teetotalism by legislation is well nigh impossible. The persuasive methods lately introduced in India, are something to be entirely discouraged, inasmuch as the consumer, whose liberty is interfered with, is sure to resent any rules and regulations.

The picketing of his shop and smashing it and causing destruction and injury will not only not placate the vendor but will make him bitter towards all temperance movements and he will, on the contrary, be inclined to give additional facilities to hard drinkers. With the inauguration of rationing of shops from 1st April 1922 the co-operation of licensed vendors to some extent is possible, there being no ostensible motive left for them for increasing drunkenness, but for this being a very complete success I think the preventive staff as explained above should be adequate.

11. Before introducing local option I should prefer to watch the effects of the rationing system. At the same time chosen leaders known to be workers in the cause of humanity or for the good of the community may be given every facility to watch the progress of the improvements introduced and to suggest to Government any modifications which they may think advisable to recommend for further measures in this direction.

12. Generally speaking there should be no objection to investing local bodies like municipalities and district local boards with the powers of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas but, in view of the recent radical changes made in the administration, as also the fact that agitators or those inclined towards the present movement of non-co-operation with Government are likely to get ingress into such local bodies, I should hesitate considerably before taking any such step. Indeed I should prefer to wait and watch the effects of the policy of rationing and the weak strength of the spirits recently inaugurated. Of course, these local bodies should be at full liberty to express sane and well matured opinions on this question and they will, of course, be carefully considered by Government but to invest them with the powers of determining the number and location of shops or to invest them with powers to raise the revenue that will have to be sacrificed is a thing I should certainly hesitate to do in view of what I have said above. Under the plea of giving up " tainted " revenue some of these bodies composed of people not of representative shades of opinion are likely to rush headlong to propose the means of taxation, which will be a source of hardship to the poor and illiterate section of the populace. This will result in dissatisfaction and discontent among the poorer classes.

13. I am not in a position to answer this question as I have had no opportunity of coming in contact with any of them.

14. I am not in a position to substantiate my statement in this respect but I am at a loss to understand how the whole or most part of the blame can justifiably be put on drunkenness when we all know that it is not the drunkard alone who is responsible for most of the serious crimes committed. If a sober individual makes up his mind to commit a crime and then drinks before doing so, the theory that drunkards commit crimes does not hold good. If such a person were not to have access to drink, he will resort to other more deleterious substance, *viz.*, drugs which are worse than liquor.

15. Without any bias as an officer of the Excise Department I am of opinion that it is impossible to enforce total prohibition. It is easy for any Legislative Assembly to introduce with the stroke of a pen total prohibition and take temporary satisfaction that they have run the Presidency dry and thus expunge the Excise revenue, but the after effects of such a policy would be very far from satisfactory. It will, in the first instance, be very difficult to replace this revenue which would go towards withholding other beneficial projects of Government and secondly, such sacrifice would be needless as already stated in paragraphs 4 to 6 above. No legislature on earth can do away with drink. The facilities for illicit manufacture by reason of the abundance in India of the raw material thereof are so great and the process so simple, that nothing short of a miracle would keep the country dry in the real sense of the word. Wide-spread discontent is bound to occur as the ordinary man who will want his dram or peg will find it difficult to get the wherewithal to pay the rapacious prices that will be demanded by the illicit vendor of the same. The recent experience of America should be an object lesson in this direction.

16. The present restrictions imposed ought to suffice for the time being. I would not *prohibit* the use of opium and hemp drugs as the sadhus and fakirs who are held in great esteem in India, which is essentially a spiritual country in contradistinction to the materialistic West, must use them. Any attempt to impose prohibition will lead to discontent and that will be fostered or fanned into flame by these fakirs, sadhus and the agitators on the plea of interfering with the religious usages of the Hindus and Mahomedans, a thing which certainly requires avoidance. The use of charas has been prohibited entirely in the Presidency proper: any undue restrictions on these also would result in people taking to other far more deleterious drugs.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent amongst the villages in proximity to H. E. H. the Nizam's dominions and in other districts so far as personal experience goes. The lower working classes especially the women administer opium in small doses to babies to keep them quiet during the working hours of the day, and I have known of cases of deaths amongst children due to the inexperience of young mothers in giving an overdose. It is a custom, to stop which would be really beneficial; but the habit is so ingrained that here we must invoke the aid of the reformer and the educated man in going round the country in the way the European and the American missionary goes about. The Indian educated man taking up analogous work and combining into a sort of a salvation army ought to go far towards weaning the ignorant masses locked up in the far away villages in India, not only from the use of opium and hemp drugs but also liquor.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. DALAL replied to the President :—" My experience in the work of the Preventive Branch is confined to Nasik and Khandesh Districts. For the present I am Acting Deputy Commissioner of Excise, Bombay Presidency. I commenced my service in the Excise Department in the capacity of an Inspector.

" I am now in charge of the Government Central Distillery at Nasik Road, which was, before its conversion into a distillery, an ' Acetone Factory.'

" As an Inspector I used to go to shops to test the liquor. As an officiating Deputy Commissioner I inspected the same in distilleries and warehouses. I do it at the Nasik distillery also.

" In West Khandesh the Bhills, the Konkanis, the Mavchis and the Kunbis are addicted to drink. They get their liquor by illicit distillation. These people are generally poor and their houses are in the interior and in malarial districts. It is therefore very difficult for Excise officers to approach them and to detect cases of illicit distillation. There is some truth in the statement that in spite of the efforts of Government it has not been possible to stamp out illicit distillation. Government have been trying their best to curb the evil.

" I am acquainted with the East Khandesh District also, although I have not served there. Conditions in East Khandesh differ from conditions in West Khandesh to a certain extent. I have served in Malegaon and I know of places like Penth, Dindori, Nawapur, etc., where illicit distillation is going on on a large scale.

" I think that the excise policy of Government is satisfactory. Government rightly think that by making liquor dear and with the increase in revenue the evil would be mitigated. Minors are not allowed to enter liquor shops. Year after year Government are increasing the price of liquor with the avowed object of making it prohibitory. I very much doubt whether total prohibition will be a success even after ten years as there is a wide opening for illicit liquor from other neighbouring states. If it is ever to be attempted, the question of the entertainment of an adequate preventive establishment will have to be considered. Attention will likewise have to be paid to the restriction of the import of illicit foreign liquor which also is being consumed by people.

" Cocaine is not cheaper than liquor and it is worse than liquor.

" Toddy will give bad effects after it is fermented, after about six hours. The results vary. Sometimes it is weak and sometimes strong. The strongest is said to be as strong as weak whisky or brandy and may be about 25° to 30° u. p. There is no means at present of ascertaining the strength of toddy. Strong toddy will produce deleterious effect. Its strength depends on trees, the conditions under which the trees are grown, and the ways and means of irrigating the land on which these trees grow.

" I say this from experience. I have not made actual experiments in this respect. I am in favour of toddy as it contains carbohydrates and sugars which have food value.

" If there be two alternatives before me, namely, (1) prohibition of country liquor and toddy and (2) prohibition of country liquor only, I would prefer the latter. Toddy as compared to liquor is harmless. Some toddy tappers add water and foam-syrup to toddy. Instances were known in which they are said to have applied cowdung and ashes inside the earthen chatty, before putting it up on trees to collect the juice.

" Fresh toddy can be made available by preventive measures. Forty and sixty u. p. liquor is not strong. To reduce its strength further will make it insipid and like water. I would prefer country liquor to unknown and inferior foreign liquor, which can be manufactured even from wood; the latter would be harmful. We shall be able to manufacture country liquor at the Nasik distillery.

" On standing liquor gets matured and it is preferable to immature liquor. The strength of foreign liquor is from 25° to 30° u. p., while that of country liquor is from 40° to 60° u. p.

" I have no experience of Advisory Committees. I am, therefore, not in a position to give any opinion on their work.

"The only facility that the clubs have is that they get liquor cheaper from wholesale merchants than they can in the market. There is no restriction on the limit of possession and transport of foreign liquor, but it is in force in the case of country liquor. This will have to be considered in restricting the consumption of country liquor.

"I think the age limit of 16 is all right. Though some say that 18 or 21 should be the age limit owing to differences of opinion it will be difficult to enforce it. The more the complications and the greater the restrictions, the more the administration gets difficult and it may encourage corruption to a certain extent.

"I am against subsidizing temperance associations. It all looks nice on paper but I doubt whether the money will be utilized in a proper manner. I am not against the principle.

"As regards local option I believe that the majority of people, in fact, are not in a position to exercise the right of vote independently and fearlessly. On principle it is a good thing.

"I am not in favour of total prohibition as it is impracticable.

"People who have come from America say that in spite of prohibition, liquor is available in America. In fact, I may safely say that there are two sides to the question as regards total prohibition in America. One section says that the country is dry, while the other differs from it altogether and says it is not."

To Mr. Madon :—"If country liquor is restricted, there being no restrictions on foreign liquor, people will take to the latter. If again foreign liquor is restricted, people will take to intoxicating drugs, which is not very desirable.

"Total prohibition of *bhang* and *ganja* will not do as the large number of fakirs and *sadhus* cannot do without them."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"The Preventive establishment will have to be enlarged with a view to detect illicit distillation. Only experience will prove the fact whether we cannot do away with this establishment and at the same time check illicit distillation. The hands of the Police being full with more important work and their number being small it will not be possible for them to take the extra work of the Excise Department in addition to their own."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"It is not possible to prevent, the importation of illicit liquor with the present Excise establishment. I have detected many cases of illicit distillation."

To Dr. Patil :—"If the shops are removed from their present buildings to other places, it will not make any change in the drinking habits of the people. Bhils are rash and dangerous once they have taken liquor."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"Konkanis, Mavchis and Vanjaris distil illicit liquor in Khandesh. Fermented toddy contains 5 to 10 per cent. alcohol. In the rural areas illicit distillation is going on. Some people like hot toddy as it differs in taste from the cold stuff. I cannot say whether the percentage of alcohol in hot toddy is less. If it is overfermented, it cannot be drunk, as it turns acid due to secondary fermentation."

No. 8.

REPLIES OF MR. S. K. NAIQUE, HONORARY GENERAL SECRETARY, THE ARYAN EXCELSIOR LEAGUE.

1. As the Honorary General Secretary of the Aryan Excelsior League, I beg to submit the following statement as the considered opinion of the League on the questionnaire sent to the League by the Excise Committee.

2. It must be stated at the outset that the League, during its existence of 22 years, has been steadily working for the amelioration of the moral condition of the people of this city. It is a kind of purity movement. It does its work indirectly by the distribution of leaflets and the arranging of lectures on matters of social, moral and educational interests.

3. As such the League has had great opportunity of knowing the condition of the people at first hand. The League is pledged to the policy of *total prohibition*, first, because that policy is in strict consonance with religious and moral sanctions, and secondly, because, it is firmly of opinion that without total prohibition any improvement in the lot of the working classes and their regeneration will remain only a pious hope. A policy of total prohibition is a policy natural to the soil of India, apart from the exigencies of revenue, etc., with which the League has nothing to do, and which must occupy a subordinate place in all considerations of national welfare.

4. Whatever may be the ideal to which the League may be pledged as a purity movement, the League is not blind to the fact that a state policy cannot be changed, all things considered, in a day by the mere stroke of the pen. It will be satisfied, therefore, if the excise policy of our Government were shaped to the total prohibition to come as a *definite* goal at the end of a marked period of time ; that period, in the opinion of the League, should not be later than *ten years at the most.* This steady aim will help to check drink at the start ; at the same time it will save the revenue from suffering a sudden shock. In the meantime, the consideration of ways and means to cover the deficits will be so easy.

5. While appreciating in full the policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, the League regrets to say that that policy has not been carried out in as expeditious and thorough a manner as was to be expected. The only change desirable in that policy is to keep total prohibition as a definite end in view. The League feels, however, that the goal is being envisaged in that light now.

6. The League feels confident that if Government are really in earnest, they *have* means at their disposal for the prevention of obtaining liquor by illicit means, either from within the province or from the Indian states and Portuguese territory. It is one of the duties of the state to prevent the smuggling of any prohibited commodity and in any form. The League thinks it is not within its competence to opine on an administration detail.

7. Of course, the League realizes that side by side with a settled administrative policy, efforts must be made to create healthy public opinion along sound constitutional lines against the evil of drink. The habits of the native population are generally amenable to control and modification, in this specific matter, by the inculcation of religious and moral precepts. The League does not think any serious discontent is likely to arise if Government adopt the policy recommended above. When the League advises total prohibition, it does not exclude from that category the use of any intoxicant or deleterious drug ; because the League considers *all* of them equally harmful, including liquor.

8. The League recommends the gradual discontinuance of *all* kinds of intoxicants. It is certainly not in favour of country liquors *per se* ; if toddy and shindi are intoxicants, and in so far as they are intoxicants, they come under the ban like any other intoxicant.

9. Recommending, as the League does, total prohibition to come at the end of a fixed period of time, it subscribes to *all* direct and indirect methods compassing that end. Consequently all sorts of constitutional means of controlling consumption should be vigorously and simultaneously utilized. It strongly recommends that the Advisory Committees should be invested wtih specific powers and their meetings should be public. Some machinery for strict non-official supervision and inspection to see that the regulations are enforced ought to be devised.

10. In passing, the League takes leave to point out that the drink problem cannot be solved apart from other considerations ; chief among them being the methods of counter-attraction, educative propaganda among the masses, housing and sanitation, freedom from overcrowding, indebtedness, etc. Any relief in these directions has its effect in making total prohibition easier.

11. The League strongly feels that drink is one of the potent causes of the increase in crime and *has* an effect in diminishing the output of work.

12. It is not within the province of this League to suggest other sources of revenue to make up for the extinction of the excise revenue. As the League has in view a fixed period of time over which it would like the policy of Government to spread with total prohibition as its consummation, the ways and means will suggest themselves to persons responsible for the carrying

out of that policy from stage to stage. The League would conclude by drawing the attention of the Committee to the following notable pronouncement of the late Mr. W. E. Gladstone, " You need not give yourselves any trouble about the revenue. The question of revenue must never stand in the way of needed reforms. Besides, with a sober population, not wasting their earnings, I shall know *where* to obtain the revenue."

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. NAIQUE replied to the President.—" My experience is that lectures on educational, moral and social matters prove of great use in curtailing the sale and consumption of liquor. (Here the witness handed over some of the pamphlets to the President to show him the nature of literature spread in various languages by the League.) There are about a hundred members in the League, all cosmopolitan, including Christians. Our activities are confined to mill-hands in particular, at Tardeo, Dadar and various other parts in Bombay, but particularly at Parel. As a result of our efforts, some of the drunkards have actually left drinking. I think that all intoxicating country liquors should be prohibited; toddy also, being deleterious, ought not to be allowed as it is not possible to get it fresh in a city like Bombay.

" Advisory Committees must not only be advisory but their recommendations must be carried out. I cannot suggest any measures definitely for this purpose.

" I myself never drink."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol.—" In my opinion total prohibition can be effected in India within ten years. To achieve this end all other possible measures may also be resorted to."

To Rao Saheb Desai.—" Advisory Committees should have specific powers. I have not studied the point as to what will be the reduction in expenditure if there is a decrease in crime as the result of total prohibition. No doubt crimes will be less. So far as India is concerned, we have to deal with different conditions in connection with the drink problem and we cannot closely follow the footsteps of America."

No. 9

REPLIES OF MR. G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS, I.E.S., M.L.C., DIRECTOR, LABOUR OFFICE, BOMBAY.

Question 15 raises a point of fundamental importance to our Presidency under the present scheme of allocation of revenues. It is in regard to this that I am mainly interested. The administration of this Presidency depends mainly on two fluctuating sources of revenues, namely, land revenue and excise revenue. While the Government of India receive from this Presidency alone a sum of over Rs. 22 crores in the present financial year from growing sources such as Customs and Income tax, all of which is collected within the Presidency, the provincial revenues amount to only 14 crores. I see no objection to utilisation of excise revenue for the most crying need in this Presidency at the present time—primary education—and it is on a par with " whisky money " in the United Kingdom.

The economic effects since the introduction of total prohibition should be closely studied from the experience of the United States. In this connexion I enclose a recent note in the *Times* regarding the American Federation of Labour's attitude towards the Volstead Prohibition Enforcement Act. An article by the Editor of the *New York World* is also appended.

*Extract from the " Times ".*

U. S. LABOUR DENOUNCES PROHIBITION.

CALL FOR BEER AND LIGHT WINES.

Washington, February 26th. The Executive Committee of the American Federation of Labour has issued a statement calling on all citizens to join Labour in a campaign for the repeal of the Volstead Prohibition Enforcement Act and the substitution of a measure permitting sale of light wines and beers.

The statement denounces the Volstead Act as a " social and moral failure, a dangerous breeder of discontent and contempt for the law ". It adds that exhaustive investigation has shown a general disregard of the law by all classes, including those who made the law ; that it has created an army of " bootleggers " and increased to an amazing extent the traffic in poisons and drugs, which has led to a higher rate of insanity, blindness, and crime among their users : that it has increased unemployment, and that it has raised the taxes of the city, State and the National Governments by a billion dollars (£220,000,000) annually.—*Reuter.*

*Extracts from the " New York Herald ".*

TWO YEARS OF PROHIBITION—ARGUMENT FOR AND AGAINST THE LAW.

DIFFICULTIES OF ENFORCEMENT—CONTRADICTORY VIEWS AS TO RESULTS.

*I.—In favour of Prohibition.*

By ROSE WESTON BULL of the Anti-Saloon League of New York.

Written into the Constitution of the United States, buttressed by far-reaching and final decisions of the Supreme Court which uphold its validity, the policy of national prohibition of the liquor traffic has become part and parcel of American life ' for better or for worse '.

Uncle Sam has no intention of getting a divorce from his newly wedded wife. He may seem to those on the other side of the Atlantic at times to neglect and even to abuse her. A disgruntled minority of his family, which always disapproved of the marriage but which long ago recognized its inevitability, is still trying to make trouble and bring about an open rupture in order to cause an international scandal and thus prevent other nations from embarking on the same venture. But even those connected with the liquor side of the household do not entertain the slightest hope of a separation. They realize that all they can do, if they do their worst, is to keep the menage stirred up by systematic misrepresentation, by propaganda calculated to create and sustain discontent and by encouraging jealousies and promoting discord.

But Uncle Sam is a shrewd and determined individual. During the past year he has proceeded calmly to strengthen the laws which are intended to insure the position of his prohibition spouse, laying plans for her future and that of the offspring of their union which he believes will be a crop of healthy, normal, peaceable, and prosperous youngsters.

*Courts support the Law.*

Since the prohibition article was prepared for last year's American Number of the *Times*, two important decisions have been made upholding the constitutionality of the prohibition law. On June 7, 1920, the Supreme Court in a unanimous decision, upheld the validity of the

amendment, and ruled that it was within the power of Congress to pass the Volstead Enforcement Act. To the bitter disappointment and chagrin of the wet faction the Court held that " the amendment by lawful proposal and ratification has become a part of the Constitution and must be respected and given effect the same as other provisions of that instrument ". It also held that Congress did not exceed its power when it enacted the Volstead law limiting the alcoholic content of beverages to less than one-half per cent.

Though this decision was a body-blow to the liquor interests, they whistled to keep up their courage, and only recently brought a test case before the same Court by which they hoped to have the amendment declared unconstitutional, on account of the limitation of seven years set by Congress to the time of its ratification by the several States necessary to secure its adoption. But the Court on May 16, 1921, held that this limitation did not invalidate the law.

The wets must now face the fact that if they want to repeal the 18th Amendment they must do what the drys did to bring about its enactment. They must conduct educational campaigns, work up popular sentiment, hold innumberable meetings in all parts of the country, bring the voters to a realization of the social, spiritual, and economic benefits of the saloon and of the value of the liquor control of politics, organize their workers, get scientific data to bolster up their cause, and persuade the churches to fall in line for a return of the saloons or for a wine and beer programme.

Prohibitionists worked for upwards of 50 years to secure the passage of the amendment. How many years would the wets have to work to secure its repeal by the same orderly and legal methods by which it was enacted ? They are wise enough not to answer. Though they are fond of saying that prohibition was " put over " they are not anxious to take the same amount of time and adopt the same methods of " putting over " a return of the old liquor system. They know that it can't be done.

### *Propaganda and " News ".*

It is recognized everywhere that prohibition has come to stay. The real issue in America to-day is the enforcement of the laws. The liquor interests and their thirsty allies know that their only hope of modifying the rigours of enforcement lies in repealing or emasculating the Volstead law and allowing every State under the concurrent clause to pass its own State enforcement law. Without central or federal supervision they hope to bring about chaos in enforcement conditions.

In order to accomplish this the Assoication against the 18th Amendment is carrying on an advertising campaign backed by the names of a few prominent people in the communities which it is attempting to organize, assuming the virtue of temperance to be its chief stock-in-trade. Various other beer and wine organizations camouflaged as " Self-determination Leagues " and " Personal Liberty Leagues ", one of these having adopted the slogan " a dollar a year will bring back your beer " are flooding the country with the propaganda.

The big cities are centres of the nullification plans of the wets. In New York and Chicago the fight is hottest, and it is only fair to let our English cousins know that much of the lurid prohibition " news " which is sent to them by special correspondents filters through pro-liquor or nullification channels. The wets realize that New York represents America in the eyes of the world, and therefore they lose no opportunity to manufacture ridiculous and impossible stories of " crime waves " due to lack of drink, of industrial depression directly traceable to the closing of the saloons, and of discontent and social unrest arising from the cessation of the flow of beer, and to send these broadcast throughout the world.

Another thing that must be taken into account by those who get their impressions of prohibition from the newspapers is the fact that law-breaking is " news " while law observance is not. Bootlegging has a decided news value, and when law-breakers scorch across our New York State highways *en route* from Canada in auto-trucks loaded with illicit liquor and fall into the clutches of the State constabulary it is a good news story worthy of a front page place and of big headlines.

Deaths from wood-alcohol poisoning, the blowing up of an illicit still, reports of home-brewing, the arrest of occasional " drunks " all these things are " news " ; while it is not news that millions of people in the country have cheerfully banished alcohol from their tables, that thousands of saloons have been replaced by legitimate business places, that refuges, asylums, prisons, and charities are being relieved of the care of erstwhile victims of the drink habit. The slow process of reconstruction, the gradual building up of homes, the reclaiming of habitual drunkards, the smiles of women, the happiness of children — these things are the natural aftermath prohibition where it is enforced, but they are not news.

### *Evidence from New York.*

The New York State Commission of Prisons, through its Secretary John F. Tremain, gave out during the winter a statement containing statistics gathered from all penal institutions in the State which proved that prohibition reduced the population of these institutions from 11,016

1919 to 9,145 in 1920. The total number of commitments during the first year of prohibition showed a decrease of 26,142 as compared with the last year of licence.

This story was printed by some of the papers, but it was not " featured ". Had it contained figures and facts to prove that prohibition was a failure or impossible of enforcement, it would have been haralded throughout the country and would have been spread on the front page of all the metropolitan dailies. It would have been the text for endless editorials, and would have been used to create anti-prohibition sentiment here and abroad. As it was it passed almost unnoticed; yet its significance is tremendous. It is a startling piece of " news " which should be of universal interest because of its economic and sociological import.

The increase in drug addiction predicted by some as the result of prohibition has not made itself felt in statistics dealing with insanity. Narcotic drugs are lesser factors in this respect to-day than ever before in the history of the State.

*Fight against Enforcement.*

While gratified with the manifold blessings that have come in the wake of the 18th Amendment the prohibitionists are not unmindful of the dangers that beset the law. They do not minimize the efforts the liquor interests are making to come back. They do not ignore the various organizations purporting to favour only light wine and beer, which are making their appearance in different parts of the country. They are alive to the spread of the craze for home brew, though as the Federal Prohibition Commissioner John F. Kramer has put it, they believe this is merely a fad as contagious as the fad for jazz music or short skirts, and that it will wear itself out in a final spasm. They know that the bootlegging evil is robbing thousands of men of the opportunity which prohibition would give them of sobering up and re-establishing themselves, and that it is prolonging the suffering from intemperance in many homes. Instead of relaxing their vigilance they are intensifying it, strengthening their organization, bolstering it by the formation of great State-wide and nation-wide movements for law enforcement, keeping an intent eye on the political situation and working to elect to State and National legislative positions only those representatives who will uphold the prohibition, as well as all other laws, and who are pledged not to weaken it.

The congressional programme of the " drys " in a nutshell is to have the existing stocks of whisky centralized in a few warehouses, to reduce the supply of liquor by an embargo of five years on manufacture and importation, and to strengthen the Volstead Act by the prohibition of beer as a medicine.

*Beer as Medicine.*

While the courts have given the liquor interests repeated jolts and set-backs during the year they have had cause to rejoice over the ruling of the *ex*-Attorney General of the United States Mitchell A. Palmer, rendered in March 1921. This ruling is an interpretation of the law given in answer to questions from internal revenue prohibition officials. The gist of it is that beer is given the same medical status as whisky and that it may be " prescribed by the physician unfettered by Government control ". This naturally infers that beer of the old alcoholic content in order to be prescribed must first be manufactured, and as no way can be devised to limit its manufacture and its distribution through illegitimate channels, the return of the brewery is inevitable and the revival of the saloon in some other form is assured if the ruling remains.

The attitude of leading medical authorities on the subject of " medical beer " is indicated by the protest against this ruling sent to Congress by over a hundred leading physicians of the country. The communication stated that malt liquors never had been listed in the United States Pharmacopœia as official medicinal remedies, and " that they serve no medicinal purpose which cannot be satisfactorily met in other ways and that without the danger of cultivating the beverage use of alcoholic liquor ". This was signed by such internationally known men as Dr. James Anders, of the University of Pennsylvania; Dr. L. Emmett Hold, Professor of Diseases of Children of Columbia University; Dr. Charles H. Mayo, the famous surgeon; Dr. Eugene Lyman Fisk, Director of the Life Extention Institute; Dr. M. J. Rosanoff, Dean of Harvard Medical School; Dr. Haven Emerson, former Commissioner of Health of New York City.

The beer and wine route is the one by which liquor interests are seeking to come back and the Palmer ruling has given them a feeling of confidence, though at the present writing a new Volstead Bill designed to prevent the use of " medicinal beer " has been submitted to Congress by the house Judiciary Committee, and will probably be passed in the near future, thus ending the brief reprieve of the brewery interests.

The prohibition fight in America is won, but the fight to secure to the country the full benefits of the prohibition law is just begun.

The British onlooker who imagined that Prohibition would automatically enforce itself, and who is shocked to hear dire tales of bootlegging, home brew, and lax enforcement, must be unfamiliar with the nature and habits of the beast which the country is striving to put into the

category of pre-historic animals with the mastodon and dinosaur. St. George's dragon was a nursery toy compared with the alcoholic megalosaurus ; but the forces of extinction are working steadily on.

## *II.—Opposed to Prohibition.*

By FRANK I. COBB, Editor of *The York World.*

Prohibition under the 18th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States has been in effect nearly two years. In so far as New York and other large cities of the country are concerned, there has been no prohibition. During that period more whisky has undoubtedly been sold and drunk in New York than during any corresponding period of the city's history.

The immediate result of prohibition was to close a large number of saloons, particularly those of the better class. It became practically impossible to obtain good beer or light wines, at least for the purposes of general consumption. But a clandestine traffic in ardent spirits has been carried on, with only spasmodic interruptions. Anybody who wants whisky can get whisky if he is willing to pay the price asked by the bootleggers. Some of it is vile and poisonous and infamous whisky. Some of it is of standard brands, including the imported. The number of persons in this city and State who are engaged in illicit traffic in liquor undoubtedly runs into thousands, and the enormous profits are a continual incentive.

There have thus far been no clearly perceptible social benefits from prohibition. It is true that many men who drank a great deal of whisky when whisky was cheap drink less whisky now that it is expensive. On the other hand, men who used to drink beer now drink whisky, inasmuch as decent beer cannot be obtained, while the steady increase in the number of drug addicts is obviously the attempt of diseased nerves to find an inexpensive substitute for alcohol. It is contended, however, and the contention is probably true, that the obstacles in the way of obtaining strong drink have greatly diminished public drunkenness and served as a protection to the weaker elements of society through a compulsory self-control. At the same time many hospitals report a marked increase in cases of acute alcoholism.

### *Effects on Crime.*

In the matter of crime there has been no diminution under prohibition. There are fewer minor offences, such as breach of the peace, assault and battery and disorderly conduct, but crimes against life and property were never before so numerous. In its worst years New York never had a more shocking murder rate than during 1920, in the first 10 months of which there were 100 murders in which the police were unable to find any evidence whatever as to the identity of the assassins. Burglary has been an almost hourly occurrence, and the situation in New York is not unique. Crimes of violence were never more common in all the large centres of population, regardless of prohibition. The 18th Amendment and the Volstead Law have thus far contributed nothing to the security of life and property.

In respect to the economic consequences of prohibition there are scanty data. Apparently it has had little effect one way or the other, although it is claimed that in numerous individual cases families have benefited greatly, that fewer men get drunk on pay night, for the excellent reason that it is more difficult to obtain the means of getting drunk. In the larger economic aspects, there is nothing to show that prohibition has exerted any influence on production or steadiness of employment. It is only fair to say in this connexion that the 18 months for which figures are available are too brief a period of time in which to form an opinion.

The worst consequences of prohibition, whatever good may have come out of it, are to be found in the popular contempt for law and Government which it has inspired. Not only has it resulted in widespread bribery and corruption among officials charged with the enforcement of prohibition, but it has produced a state of public anarchy in respect to that enforcement.

### *General Defiance of the Law.*

Defiance of the Volstead Act and of the 18th Amendment is not restricted to any class of society or walk in life. Men of the highest character and attainment, statesmen, authors, artists, judges, lawyers, financiers, business men, artisans, and day labourers alike violate the law, and daily deny the power of Government to supervise their personal habits and manner of life.

The American people have never been unduly respectful to statute law which is enacted wholesale and enforced retail, but hitherto they have had a deep and abiding reverence for their Constitution. That reverence is now shattered by an amendment that is at war with the ancient guarantees of liberty and was incorporated in the Constitution without submission to a vote of the people in any State. The whole structure of organized Government is correspondingly weakened.

Political discontent in respect to prohibition has kept pace with social discontent. What prohibition might do if adopted by a vote of the people we do not know, for the issue has never been submitted to the people. No great political party has ever endorsed prohibition. No

President has ever been elected as a champion of prohibition. The amendment was ratified as the result of the efforts of the most systematically organized lobby ever known to American politics, and the people have had nothing to say. Even when the voters of Ohio repudiated at a referendum the action of the Legislature in ratifying the 18th Amendment, the United States Supreme Court held that the vote was invalid, and the voters of the State were not the Legislature of the State within the meaning of the Federal Constitution.

*Never approved by the people.*

The American system of party Government, which is the least responsive and the most irresponsible system in the world, is such that since the 18th Amendment was smuggled into the Constitution, it has never been possible to bring prohibition before a tribunal of the voters. Both the Democrats and the Republicans dodged the issue in 1920. Both the candidates for the Presidency played fast and loose with it. The result is that the most far-reaching legislation ever enacted in the United States has successfully eluded the ballot box and remains a matter of private understanding between Congress and the paid lobbyists of the Anti-Saloon League.

The ultimate moral and political consequences of such methods of Government hardly require elucidation to the British people. Nor is it necessary to point out the menace to all responsible authority of every kind which such methods inevitably breed.

The English-speaking people have never submitted gracefully or for long to sumptuary legislation. Such legislation is contrary to their traditions, and in the long run these traditions will prevail. Even the friends of prohibition have ceased to claim that there is enforcement of the law in any part of the country in which public sentiment runs against the amendment and the Statute. Their contention is that prohibition will become effective in a generation, those that now drink having died and those that are now adolescent knowing nothing of intoxicating liquor. That may be true, but for the present it is only a theory, a hypothesis, which is not strengthened in any way by the vast amount of home brewing and distillation that goes on everywhere.

Whatever the future results of prohibition may be as affecting the consumption of alcohol, it has thus far instigated more lawlessness, more defiance of Government, more contempt for the Constitution and for due process of law than any other political act in the history of the nation. Our British friends are well advised in seeking to study the effect of prohibition in the United States and they can make no mistake by refusing to follow the American example. The evils of the excessive use of intoxicating liquors cannot be denied, nor can any intelligent person question the wisdom of a strict supervision over the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages; but the American system of prohibition goes to an extreme that defeats its own ends, as fanaticism and bigotry are always likely to do, and it is steadily debauching the political life of the American people.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. FINDLAY SHIRRAS replied to the President:—"On the 1st of April 1921 I came here as Director of Labour Office. Previous to my coming to this Presidency, I was in the Government of India. From 1910 to 1913 I was on special duty in the Finance Department of the Government of India and from 1914 to 1921 Director of Statistics with that Government. In 1913 I was attached to the British Board of Trade at the request of the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India.

"May I make one statement"?

President—"Certainly."

Witness—"I am very indebted to you. I have not studied the Excise question except from three points of view; first the financial side of the question in so far as it affects this Presidency; secondly the effect of prohibition in the United States of America; thirdly, I have as Director of the Labour Office here, been brought into more or less intimate contact with the question as affecting Bombay's industrial classes.

"I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the Sir Stanley Reed Industrial Dispute Committee's Report, especially in connection with the question of temperance among the working classes. It will be found in paragraph 16 of their Report which reads as follows:—

> '16. *Liquor and Bucket shops*—Every witness has borne testimony to the demoralisation caused by the drink habit, which is the sink down which most of the surplus wages disappear. It is not within the terms of our reference to go fully into this thorny question; we confine ourselves to the expression of the hope that Government will systematically, cope with it by reducing the number of liquor shops in the industrial area, reducing the amount of liquor offered for sale, reducing the hours when liquor can be sold, closing the shops on pay days and holidays and raising the duty whilst lowering the proof strength.'

"I have been discussing the question of total prohibition in America with several of my American friends here. The Volstead Prohibition Act, they all agree, is unworkable and the

Act will have to be amended. In this connection the views of the American Federation of Labour are of interest. The Federation has strongly protested against the prohibition of beer and other light wines. The Volstead Act brings into operation what may be included intoxicating liquors. Another question is in connection with the criminal statistics of America. I can gather no information from these statistics which will show that America is better off from total prohibition than other countries. In fact, the book 'American Police System' by Raymond Fosdick shows that in Chicago and New York the criminal statistics are very high. For example, in 1917-18 the crimes relating to homicide in New York are six times greater than in London. It is true that bank deposits have gone up considerably since the introduction of prohibition. This, however, may be due not to prohibition but to the extraordinarily good trade America had just after the Armistice. Generally speaking, the statistics available are so recent and therefore cover so short a period that no definite conclusions are possible. I am assured, however, first, that 1920 and 1921 were very untypical years in America and secondly, that it is impossible to have any adequate preventive staff to counteract this tremendous amount of illict distillation and the illicit importation of intoxicating liquors especially from Canada. Another point urged is that since the adoption of prohibition the use of drugs has increased in America. I think the Committee may have to consider this drink problem in our Presidency independently of the experience in America.

"We find it extremely difficult to collect statistics of the whole family budget of the labourer in regard to miscellaneous items because people will never tell exactly what they spend on drink. We have three lady investigators and one male investigator who have been collecting budgets for labourers chawls. They show that the average monthly income is about Rs. 63 and the average monthly expenditure on liquor is 4 per cent., but it is estimated by the investigators that the average expenditure on this head may amount to Rs. 4 or eight per cent. of the income and the low figure is due to the unwillingness as well as the inability of the working classes to quote the correct figures. In the Excise Report the *per capita* expenditure in Bombay is as follows:—

Rs. 1-2-0 in 1918-19 per mensem.
Rs. 1-4-0 in 1919-20 " "
Rs. 1-5-0 in 1920-21 " "

These figures are arrived at by dividing the total value of the liquor consumed by the population not of the industrial classes only but of the total population. Our budget figures per family are, of course, higher than these as they refer to the family. If we assume (and the assumption is a correct assumption on the whole) that only the father of the family drinks, the percentage expenditure will be higher than four per cent. In my tours round the mill areas I get to know employees and the Labour Office is in a position to collect reliable data in regard to working classes. I am glad to say that the women workers do not generally drink, but it is the men who do so. Most of the Maratha women do not drink. They may very rarely take a little intoxicant as medicine. The case of low caste women like the Mahars, the Mochees and the Dheds is different. Most of these drink liquor on festival days.

"It is noticeable that after the payment of wages (wages are paid monthly about between the 13th and the 15th of each month) the percentage of absentees in the mill rises considerably. I give you for example two typical mill figures:—

| | |
|---|---|
| One Mill— | |
| 13th .. .. .. .. | 4·55 |
| 15th .. .. .. .. | 11·18 |
| 16th .. .. .. .. | 19·74 |
| 17th .. .. .. .. | 17·29 |
| Another Mill— | |
| 13th .. .. .. .. | 13· 4 |
| 14th .. .. .. .. | 13·65 |
| 15th .. .. .. .. | 14·59 |

"The absence is not entirely due to drink but it is due to a 'surfeit' of money, a considerable amount of which is frittered away and not kept back for a rainy day. The Commissioner of Excise may be in a position to say whether the sale of liquor increases on the pay day. It must be remembered that the Indian labourer is not of the same type as his confrere in the west. The Indian industrial worker is at heart an agriculturist and he comes to Bombay to make money and returns to his native village as early as possible. The greatest need of the moment is education and housing. I cannot too strongly emphasize the importance of education to labourers. That alone will improve their standard of living and make them feel the dignity of their new occupations and temperance. By education I do not mean 'literary education' but education which will make them rise in the world and free them from petty tyrannies of life which the country engenders.

"The Committee may be interested to know the percentage of expenditure on different items.

| | |
|---|---|
| Food | 56 per cent. |
| Fuel and lighting | 6 „ „ |
| Clothing | 12 „ „ |
| House rent | 8 „ „ |
| Miscellaneous | 18 „ „ |

"Under 'Miscellaneous' the chief items are.—(1) Liquor and bhang, (2) tobacco and pan supari, (3) interest on debts, (4) travelling expenses to and from work and (5) other expenditure. Sub-letting is the curse of the chawl system. In this connection paragraph 14 on housing in the Industrial Disputes Committee's Report should be read. I think the present policy of Government in regard to the drink problem is a slow but sure one, *viz.*, rationing all shops and reducing consumption. I am against total prohibition because it is not a practical proposition.

"In answer to the President's question—I think total prohibition will unnecessarily interfere with communities like Europeans, Parsees and others.

"I now turn to the question of finance. The latest revised figures for this Presidency for 1921-22 for Excise are 340 lakhs. Our total provincial revenue is about 14 crores. Central revenues collected in this Presidency, *i. e.*, which go to the Central Government, amount to 23 crores 91 lakhs made up as follows :—

| | Lakhs. |
|---|---|
| Customs | 1,371 |
| Taxes on income | 701 |
| Salt | 120 |
| Opium | 11 |
| Tributes | 14 |
| Miscellaneous | 174 |
| Total | 2,391 |

I wish to emphasize the importance of keeping excise revenue because we have committed ourselves to a large expenditure on education and at present the two main heads of revenue of the 14 crores are land revenue and excise revenue either of which fluctuate largely, but land revenue especially. The last year in regard to excise was an abnormal year owing to political and other causes, but the point which I wish to make is that we cannot afford to discard excise revenue. Moreover, the Meston Committee which fixed our provincial contribution to the Central Government estimated that the Army would cost 45 crores and that the exchange rate will be two shillings. These facts have been entirely falsified and it is more than likely that were a revision made to-day Bombay would have to pay more not less. It is all the same necessary for this Presidency to develop her provincial sources of revenue including excise. The fluctuations in excise revenue from 455 lakhs in 1920-21 to 340 this year cannot be viewed with equanimity from the financial point of view.

"For the year 1922-23 the figures are as follows :—

| | Lakhs. |
|---|---|
| **Central Revenues :—** | |
| Customs | 1,274 |
| Tax on income | 660 |
| Salt | 153 |
| Opium | 12 |
| Contributions | 13 |
| Balance | 56 |
| **Provincial Revenues :—** | |
| Land revenue | 597 |
| Excise | 371 |
| Stamps | 230 |
| Forest | 89 |
| Registration | 14 |

Were total prohibition to be enforced I see no other source of revenue except real and personal property taxes *plus* increased taxation on, for example, contracts, shares, etc. A difficulty about succession duty is the Hindu joint family system."

To Mr. Madon :—"There are three ways of taxing the people of this Presidency at the moment, increasing (1) income-tax, (2) import duty on luxuries and (3) a property tax. We might add fourthly the question of taxing share documents, etc."

To the Reverend Mr. Macnicol :—"It is unusual to pass laws if you have no staff to carry them out. To ensure prohibition in this Presidency we should have to go in for a large, very large, force of excise officers and this would be more than the State could afford."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" The money saved from liquor might be spent by workmen on clothing, food, luxuries and religious ceremonies. The money, of course, would be better employed in this way. Miss Pimpalkhare, the chief lady investigator, is making enquiries and investigations into the condition of workmen and labourers in the City of Bombay."

To Dr. Patil :—" Generally men drink the most. The percentage stated above in regard to expenditure on liquor is the percentage of total family earnings and not the percentage of the man's earnings and the percentage of man's expenditure to his income will be higher. I have no information about workmen thronging drink shops on their pay days. I think that welfare work, if carried on, will reduce the drink habit."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I am not prepared to say that the rationing system will lesson the drink habit quickly.

" As I stated above I have not studied the excise question in our Presidency with the thoroughness which I should have liked. I have confined myself in my evidence mainly to the financial side of the question and to what is taking place among industrial workers.

" In conclusion, I should like to say that the views expressed are my own and they are not, therefore, necessarily in any way the views of Government. "

## No. 10.

### Replies of Mr. ANANDRAO NARAYAN SURVE, B.A., LL.B., M.L.C., Advocate.

1. I am an Advocate of the Bombay High Court. In the course of drafting petitions on behalf of the excise licensees, which involve a study of the literature on the subject, and while discussing the matter with them, I have had ample opportunities of forming an opinion on the excise policy pursued by the Government of Bombay.

2. (*a*) The policy so far as it is based on expediency does not call for any criticism. But if the Bombay Government had pursued it in the spirit rather than in the letter, the drink question would have assumed quite another aspect.

(*b*) People necessarily require many other things than liquor but Government do not make provision to meet those demands. Though Government profess not to interfere with the habits of people, they have in reality done so, *e. g.*, by substituting mhowra liquor in the place of toddy spirit. Therefore as regards non-interference with the habits of people or meeting the needs of the public, Government have departed from the policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India referred to. They have not done anything substantial either to minimise temptation to those who do not drink or to discourage excess among those who do. They have not subordinated considerations of revenue in furtherance of the policy referred to above. Government have been successful in making the tax on liquor as high as they can, but it has failed in checking consumption in urban areas. It is true that the number of shops in the whole Presidency is restricted, but if shops in one area are closed, new shops in other areas are opened; and in doing so Government neither minimise temptation nor respect public opinion. The trend of recent medical opinion is that liquor of any quality and in any quantity, small or great, is injurious to health; therefore, in professing to give liquor of good quality not injurious to health Government are trying to do what is impossible. Apart from this profession Government did issue liquor which was bad in appearance and injurious to health when they imported spirits from abroad on the failure of the recent mhowra crop. To be brief the policy in practice is a mere shadow lacking the substance of real desire to promote temperance. It has not put down any check, much less effective check, on intemperance.

3. If Government is sincere in its efforts to introduce temperance it must forego the temptation of revenue arising from excise on liquor. Shops once closed must be closed for ever. Public should be given local option. Advisory Committees should contain a larger non-officia element and their recommendations should be respected.

4. If total prohibition is possible, I am certainly in favour of it. Religions, especially Hindu and Mahomedan, prescribe abstinence. On grounds of morality temperance is desirable. Poorer sections of the people, if they could be weaned from this vice, will be happier than they are at present. Prohibition is certainly not a practical measure if it is to be achieved in the course of a decade or two. To make prohibition a practical proposition temperance propoganda on the right lines must be carried on continuously and not spasmodically as it is done at present by a few institutions whose efforts are hardly able to make any lasting effect on the public.

5. (*a*) If prohibition is introduced immediately or in advance of public opinion there is positive danger of illicit distillation, but if it is effected gradually and if it keep pace with the progress of public opinion, no fear need be entertained that people will make a bad use of the articles mentioned.

(*b*) If the public opinion is so far educated as to do without liquor, the proximity of Indian States and neighbouring British and foreign territories would not affect our abstention. But people are not prepared to go dry to-day, hence the proximity of wet tracts must be taken into account. This is a reason why prohibition should be gradual and evolutionary and not revolutionary.

(*c*) When Government are minded to introduce reforms they have not cared for the discontent it may engender. Interference with the customs and habits of the people and consequent discontent are very weak arguments to perpetuate the drink evil and therefore do not deserve any consideration. Moreover gradual reduction leading to total prohibition presupposes that the people are being educated; hence when the time for total prohibition arrives there would be nobody or very few indeed whose customs or habits would be interfered with; and their objection on that score, if it at all exists, may be overruled for the welfare of the greater number.

(*d*) This reason also supports the view that prohibition should be gradual.

(*e*) If prohibition is brought about by revolutionary methods, there is not a mere probability but a moral certainty that people would take to intoxicants and deleterious drugs. Experience of America supports this view. Medicinal alcohol cannot be suppressed and people would drink alcohol *plus* some drug in the form of tinctures when they do not get alcohol by itself. They would drink perfumes which contain alcohol. They might even take to denatured or methylated spirit which is both cheap and easily accessible. For these reasons prohibitory reform must be brought about by an evolutionary method in which people are educated to abhor drink.

6. There will be some truth in this argument if the public is divided in two distinct categories, *viz.*, drinkers and non-drinkers, and if they are kept quite separate from each other. But it is not possible to do so ; therefore, there will be no guarantee that the future generation which will remain in association with the present generation which uses drink or its substitute and which will have full opportunities to imitate and practice its bad example will remain free from vice.

7. In the initial stages prohibitory legislation is not only undesirable but would defeat its own ends. Temperance propaganda, making liquor dearer and difficult to procure, would in the long run secure the object in view. Legislation is desirable when the masses are weaned away from the vice and when only the incorrigibles remain to be dealt with.

8. Prohibition, in the first instance, should be directed against distilled liquors only. Fermented liquors, *e. g.*, toddy and *shindi*, though they contain alcohol when fermentation is complete, its quantity is less, almost negligible, in them than in distilled liquors. Moreover, by departmental rules it is possible to supply fresh toddy (the demand for toddy is in excess of its supply, hence toddy does not remain in stock to get fermented) in which fermentation has not commenced or has not advanced appreciably. In such a form toddy is a harmless if not a wholesome beverage. Unless it is desired to convert people altogether and to make them puritanical, which I do not consider desirable, toddy should be allowed.

9. I think absolute prohibition is feasible only at a cost and hardship which would be unbearable to the public. To control consumption of liquors and gradually to reduce it Government should manufacture spirituous liquors departmentally and their supply should be reduced by a fixed percentage every year. Liquors thus manufactured should be tinged so as to distinguish them from spirits of other manufacture ; and the possession of liquors other than those of departmental manufacture should be made illegal and punishable. It is possible to prohibit foreign liquors almost immediately if the legislature will stop their importation. Whether prohibition is going to be total or partial an embargo should be placed on foreign liquors immediately because doing so would be helpful to bring about prohibition of country liquor and because the provincial Government will not suffer in its revenue. Its revenue from this source consists only of fees received for issuing vend licenses. No preventive establishment would be required because *ex hypothesi* the liquor is not produced locally. Consumers of foreign liquor are fewer in number, therefore its prohibition would not affect a large number. Besides those who are affected will have a substitute in country liquor. The Government of India obtain a considerable revenue by way of import duty from this source. Whether they will be willing to give it up is a question, but an attempt should be made to induce them to sacrifice that revenue for the welfare of the people of this Presidency.

10. (*a*) Rationing of shops should not be governed on a group basis, *i. e.*, if there are in an area four shops A, B, C and D and C is closed, then the liquor consumed by C should not go to increase the quantity of A, B, or D. They should get only what they would have got if C were not to be closed. Adoption of this policy would effect a greater and speedier reduction.

(*b*) If foreign liquor remains in the field, then the price of country liquor cannot be increased beyond a certain limit, because doing so would render foreign liquor cheaper than the other and would encourage its consumption. This means can be rendered effective in reducing consumption only when foreign liquor is suppressed.

(*c*) Shops closed in one area must not be permitted to be opened in another. If a shop is closed it must be closed finally and for ever. Then only true reduction in shops is possible.

(*d*) I am in favour of a reduction in the hours of sale, especially the evening hours. Reduction of days does not contribute to reduction in consumption, because when the shops are closed during the Shimga and Mohorum holidays people buy their supplies before the shops are closed. What really happens is that the shop-keeper sells the same quantity of liquor in one day which he would have otherwise done in two or three days during which the shops remain closed.

(*e*) Reduction of strength is considered as one of the means of encouraging temperance; but my opinion is different. Those who drink do so to become intoxicated. If the strength is weakened they would require more liquor to induce intoxication. To prevent that it will become necessary to issue only a certain quantity to a consumer ; but it will not be practicable to enforce that rule because a consumer will visit a number of shops instead of having his fill in one shop. Moreover, there is the danger that people would take to foreign liquor when they will find out that the country liquor is reduced in strength.

(*f*) Regulations relating to shops, if planned judiciously and carried out sincerely, will help materially in reducing consumption.

(*g*) My observations on foreign liquor are stated above.

(*h*) Temporary licenses in fairs, etc., should be prohibited. Licenses in connection with railway refreshment rooms and restaurant cars should be withdrawn. Similarly, licenses to sell liquor within the enclosures of race-courses should not be issued.

(*i*) The present age limit should be raised to 21 years, because by that time a person is fully developed and becomes less susceptible to evil results of alcohol.

(*j*) Encouragement may be given a trial.

(*k*) Restriction or prohibition of removal of liquor from shops would lead to beneficial results in connection with the reduction of days contemplated in question 10 (*d*).

11. I am in favour of the introduction of local option. It should be exercised by the public through well organised bodies, *e. g.*, municipalities, local boards, village panchayats. These bodies must be thoroughly representative, in the true sense of that term, of the public whom they profess to represent.

12. The answer presupposes that the local bodies are not invested with the power of increasing the number of shops. If that be so, then they may be empowered to determine the number and location of shops in their respective areas. I am no in favour of making them responsible for raising any part of the revenue that may be sacrificed, because excise is not a legitimate source of revenue. No Government can claim a monopoly of raising its revenues by means which promote immorality. It is a well known axiom that the system of licensing a trade is not to be introduced for the purpose of revenue, but for defraying the expenses incurred in controlling that trade. When a local body does away with the liquor traffic altogether, Government does not render any service to it for which it could ask to be recompensed. As to the loss of gallon duty Government cannot insist upon its subjects to consume a particular quantity of liquor or pay duty on it. If liquor is not consumed Government cannot claim any duty, because they are to get it only if it is consumed. Government cannot compel a person or an area to drink liquor so that it may not suffer loss in revenue. Or look at it from another point. Suppose Government maintain a shop in an area but people there do not drink, then can Government claim any loss that it may suffer ? If it cannot, then why should a local body be held responsible to make good the loss Government may suffer.

13. The present Advisory Committees are not useful to the extent that was expected of them. Their recommendations are given effect to only when they coincide with the official view, otherwise they are brushed aside. The constitution of some of these bodies is such that half of its number consists of Government servants who are expected to support departmental views. Of the other half some, through human weakness, vote in favour of the departmental view. Thus these committees on account of their constitution are not helpful in prompting the cause of temperance. I recommend a change in their constitution so as to secure a non-official majority. Their suggestions, if supported by a three-fourths number of votes, should be given effect to, even if the departmental view be opposed to them.

14. It is maintained that drink leads to criminality, but it is not correct to say so. Those who earn and can afford to pay for their drinks do not commit criminal offences. Those who have no money to satisfy their craving for drink may be committing thefts or other offences, and the view referred to above may be correct so far as it applies to them, but the number of such is not appreciably large. It is true that nearly all criminals are addicted to drink, but that fact would not warrant us in saying that it was drink alone that made them criminals. To their criminality drink might have been one of the contributory causes, but it certainly never is the only cause. As to drink leading to disorderly behaviour the figure in the latest report of the Excise Department discloses that 6,552 persons were convicted for drunkenness in the year 1920-21 in a population consisting of 16,005,015 souls. The annual per capita consumption is 7·8 drams. These figures will not warrant us in saying that drunkenness is so far advanced as to make people criminals.

Drink, if taken during working periods, would affect the output of work; but those who drink do so generally at the close of their day's labours. Therefore, the moderate use of drink overnight is not likely to affect the output of next day's work.

15. I advocate gradual reduction ; therefore, new sources of revenue need not be explored. The gradual loss of revenue from this source can be made up by the development of other existing sources supplemented in case of real necessity by increasing the rates of existing taxes where there is a margin for increase.

16. No special remarks to offer beyond expressing a desire that along with liquor, opium and hemp drugs may be prohibited also.

17. Mothers belonging to the poor and working classes give opium to their children. In some places " bal goli ", a preparation containing opium, is given instead.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. SURVE replied to the President :—" I say total prohibition is within the range of practical politics. In my opinion people should be educated first ; there must be educative propaganda. Legislative enactment is not wanted. I think local option will have an effect provided the local option committees are the roughly representative of the people. I do not

think that local option and Advisory Committees can work simultaneously. I cannot give any definite period within which total prohibition should be effected. The system of rationing may be effective to some extent. I cannot say whether the provision of rationing alone will have the desired effect. By "revolutionary" I understand all of a sudden.

"I will allow toddy before it is completely fermented; toddy which has been completely fermented is unwholesome.

"The present taxes are heavy. But if prohibition is complete we shall have to see what further items we can tax. I think, as far as possible the present taxes should not be increased; that is what I mean. The general condition of the masses will be improved if this ideal of total prohibition were to be materialised."

To Mr. Madon :—"I cannot recommend any increase in taxes. To meet deficits retrenchment should be effected. As some irrigation works are not paying 2 per cent. interest on the capital expended there is room for increase of taxation under irrigation. It is not possible to reduce the expenditure by Rs. 4 crores.

"Mhowra flowers were available before the Act was amended. I would prefer neither mhowra nor toddy spirit. We are prohibited from consuming spirits by tradition. To get good results shops once closed must be closed for ever. Government offer shops at auction sales and people come forward to bid. Then they represent to the Excise authorities that they are suffering loss and they be permitted to change the site of their shops; and when they are permitted to do so there may be in one locality three, four or more shops; that is certainly not good. I do not think that the number of shops is increased. If we want to tackle this problem, we shall have to educate public opinion. By 'general public' I mean people who drink. I do not directly attribute any crime or crimes to drinking."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"I belong to the Bhandari community. They are agriculturists and some of them distilled toddy spirit. Toddy spirit is replaced by mhowra spirit. Out of mhowra and toddy spirits the latter is considered less deleterious and its consumers believed it to possess medicinal virtues.

"If people are not educated by private efforts, we shall have to rely on Government measures. Government aid and public activities must be the sole factors. I expect prohibition within 20 or 25 years; if Government and the public co-operate, it may be a question within practical politics.

"Alcohol in any form is injurious.

"I do think a sacrifice is worth trying in connection with prohibition of drink.

"Drinking public know nothing about the prevention of drink. It is only agitators who know about prevention.

"I cannot give any period for voluntary prohibition as several factors will have to be considered. I shall have absolutely no objection for total prohibition, provided people are not harassed. Communities who take foreign liquor will have to suffer to a certain extent.

"I do not want any legislative enactment. I have stated that that will not be successful and there will be a lot of illegal transportation of liquor.

"Labourers spend some amount of their income on drink. In some cases both men and women drink. There are classes; some are heavy drinkers. Rs. 30 to 40 will be a respectable income. Irrigation canals of the Southern Division are paying only 2 per cent. The total area commanded by canals is much too small."

To Dr. Patil :—"Rationing alone will not be completely effective.

"I do not like prohibition by a sudden stroke of the pen; I want it to be gradual.

"My idea of gradual prohibition is to work hand in hand with Government and to co-operate with them in reducing the licenses and by promoting temperance work.

"Forty-eight hours after drawing it, toddy becomes unfit for consumption. Its alcoholic strength is 92 to 94 degrees under proof. Even after 10 or 12 hours keeping toddy may be considered fresh. My opinion about toddy is based on paragraph 137, page 53 of the Indian Excise Committee's Report, 1905-06.

'Toddy is not adulterated to increase its intoxicating qualities."

No. 11.

REPLIES OF MR. N. D. KADAM, CO-OPERATIVE INSPECTOR, CURRIMBHOY INSTITUTE OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE LEAGUE, BOMBAY.

1. (*a*) I have worked in different capacities in railways, mills and the Social Service League, Bombay, and at present am working as a Co-operative Inspector in a welfare institute conducted for the benefit of the co-operatives of the Currimbhoy Ebrahim Mills.

(*b*) I have been the President of the Tardev Maratha Temperance Association for fifteen years ; further, I am the President of the Central Temperance Committee of the Currimbhoy Institute for the last one year. I was also an honorary lecturer appointed by the Bombay Presidency Temperance Association for five years.

The views I am going to give below are based on the experience obtained during work in this respect for the above-mentioned period.

2. The policy of Government as expressed in the extract " This settled policy.... subordinated " is a fair one. But the methods, as indicated in the very extract are absolutely detrimental and have vitiated all of its spirit, inasmuch as thousands of persons and families have been ruined economically, morally and physically. This threefold degeneration can very well be realised from a single fact that since the inauguration of this policy up to the present day drunkards alone have contributed each year several millions of rupees more to the Government treasury to the utter ruin of their own families. The result of all this has been that Excise revenue forms an important asset with the Government of Bombay in their administration, being about one-third of the total revenue of the Bombay Presidency, and the whole administration would be paralysed, it is feared, if drunkards would not drink and thus withhold their economic support from it. Now here we can pause a little and see the merits of the policy of 1905, a policy which has made Government helplessly dependent on the sympathy of drunkards for its efficient administration.

3. I therefore totally disapprove of the Government policy of 1905. I recommend in its place a policy as declared in Government Resolution No. 2838 of May 1879, the purport of which is " Government does not care even for a single farthing obtainable as income from liquor ". In furtherance of this policy I would suggest that Government Resolutions Nos. 3125, 2813 and 6092 of 19th May 1874 and 3rd June 1875 respectively will be highly useful.

In order to bring the above recommended policy into effect the following suggestions also will be of great practical use.

(1) Liquor shops should be closed on Sundays and holidays.

(2) Liquor shops should be kept open only on three days in a week from 2 to 5 p. m.

(3) There should be a seventy-five per cent. reduction in the number of shops.

(4) Liquor shops should be located at a distance from the main locality.

In suggesting the above policy I would add that where the welfare of the people is the question of primary importance with Government all considerations of income from excise must be subordinated. Now we can see the merits of the above four suggestions. By keeping the liquor shops open three days in a week those who cannot live without it will have it, and those who are not addicted to it but take it because it is easily available will be saved. Also those who are quite sober and beginners but likely to be spoiled by bad company will be rescued.

4. Yes. Because (1) it is not at all a necessary item for man's life and (2) moderation is not possible even for thoughtful persons. A man once addicted to it becomes a wretch physically, morally and economically. It is practical within a short period if the policy suggested in 3 is strictly followed wherein steps have already been suggested.

6. The argument is absolutely correct and even for the benefit of the present generation.

7. Legislation alone will be effective as all other efforts have failed, not being backed by it.

8. Yes.

9. See no. 3.

10. The effective means have been suggested in no. 3.

11. People of all shades of opinions and sexes throughout India have already demonstrated their opinion in this matter. Only Government have not done their part as yet.

12. The question should be entrusted to an elected body of the people. The word " sacrificed " used for the loss of income from such unsacred traffic is really sacrificed as being termed " sacrificed ". No responsibility of raising revenues should rest on this body.

13. No.

14. There is increase in crime.

15. The question is quite irrelevant as far as the policy given in the extract is concerned.

The rest of the questions are not worth considering.

I am sure that if the recommendations made in item no. 3 are carried out the welfare of the people and the aim of the Committee will both be achieved.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KADAM replied (in Marathi) to the President :—" I am inspecting co-operative societies. There are 30 societies under me in six factories. The members are of various castes. I am doing this work since 1913. Before that I was working in a mill. I established the Tardeo Maratha Temperance Association in 1907. There are 50 members. To advise people not to have drink is the motto of this Association. We cannot boast of the success achieved. Five or seven out of a hundred have left drinking in consequence of our preaching. People leave off drinking in Shrawan. As long as liquor is available it is not possible to stop drinking. I think if local option is brought into force it will be helpful. So long as some drunkards are alive wine is necessary ; lessening of shops will still be of great use and these drunkards will stop drinking entirely within ten years or so. I know something outside Bombay too. My outside experience is confined to Kolaba and Ratnagiri Districts where I have found some Khalasees, Kolees and Katavadees, who are supposed to be drunkards, never drink."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—" I make no distinction in foreign and country liquor, both are equally harmful."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" People curtail their desire for drink during the months of Shrawan and Adhik Shrawan, but in that case they live upon hope."

To Dr. Patil :—" On pay days and holidays shops should be closed. In co-operative societies non-drunkers pay their loans regularly ; those who drink promise to pay regularly but usually fail ; they are never out of debt.

" Our Konkan race is being degenerated owing to the drink habit.

" Shop-keepers give wine on credit.

" People will have more confidence in temperance propaganda if Government will render help to such work. There is a difference of opinion about total prohibition.

" I have seen liquor shops. Mutton is also supplied there with rice, *bhaji and pav.* People drink much on account of this and because also it is an allurement.

" I am not in favour of the " off " shop system, as in that case women and children will also go on drinking if liquor is taken home."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Out of 30 societies no one is free from loans. All are debtors. They also take loans from Marwadis in order to pay us to keep credit with us and borrow from other sources.

" Over-drinking results in quarrels. Shops should be closed immediately before Shimga.

" Foreign liquor is also generally used by labourers. No one prefers to drink wine at home.

" Liquor shops should not be located on prominent places in order to save mill-hands from the evil of drink. They never drink when they are on work. They are not allowed to leave the factory when they are on work.

" Some people gather in the Currimbhoy Institute Hall for lectures, *katha* and *kirtan* attract many people."

## No. 12.

### Replies of Mr. RAMCHANDRARAO VITHALRAO VANDEKAR, Joint Secretary, the People's Union, Bombay.

1. I am a landlord and merchant. I am Secretary, Maratha Educational Conference; Secretary, People's Union; member of the Maratha Advisory Board; member of the Sub-Committee, Social Service Work; a member of the Managing Committee, Kamgar Hitawardhak Sabha member of the Committee of the Indian Temperance Association annually taking part in the Holika Samelan Committee for temperance work.

2 and 3. The Government policy to discourage excess among those who drink, to the furtherance of which all consideration of revenue must be absolutely subordinated, is by all means commendable. But the ways and means adopted for this purpose are not sufficient and practical in carrying out the policy stated in the Resolution of the Government of India.

The actual results of the policy as it is carried out have not minimised the temptation to drink. The masses being illiterate could not withstand the temptation and have become dead drunkards. It is essential to protect people from this habit and Government should adopt measures to keep the temptation away from them.

Of late shops in the mill areas have been multiplying and the earnings of mill hands mostly swallowed up by liquor vendors. There should be no liquor shops on roads and thoroughfares in the mill hand quarters and in the vicinity of mills. The quantity of liquor to be sold to individuals should be further restricted and the carriage of liquor outside the shop premises disallowed on penalty. On pay days of mill hands, on holidays and Sundays shops should be closed.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. The workmen being illiterate will not use alcohol in moderation. Total prohibition is the only practical measure to keep the mill hands and labouring classes away from the temptation. No liquor should be allowed to be sold except by the licensed vendor as in the case of the poisonous medical drugs.

5 (*a*) By maintaining an efficient staff illicit distillation can be prevented.

(*b*) By maintaining an honest staff of Preventive officers.

(*c*) Indians by religious convictions are total abstainers.

6. Certainly.

7. Legislative measures as well as efforts by social workers and religious preachers.

8. Unfermented toddy and shindi be allowed.

9. Absolute prohibition, if feasible, is desirable.

10. Next to total prohibition all the proposals are commendable.

11. No such things except total prohibition.

12. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) No.

13. The existing Advisory Committees presided over by officials have not been found to be very useful institutions. The Advisory Committees as far as possible should be made up of non-official members, with increase of powers.

14. Yes, considerable.

15. By putting excessive duties on articles of luxury, such as provision, etc., imported into India.

16. The same restrictions should be put as in the case of alcohol.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is much prevalent in the Deccan among the poorer classes.

18. The percentage of the death rate among children is disastrous owing to the custom of giving opium to children.

---

### ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. VANDEKAR replied to the President:—"I am Secretary, Maratha Educational Conference, member of the Maratha Advisory Board, member of the Sub-Committee, Social Service Work, and member of the Managing Committee, Kamgar Hitawardhak Sabha. We work specially for our backward mill-hands and other labourers. We do include depressed classes among them. I have been working in the Kamgar Hitawardhak Sabha for the last 12 years.

"If Government will help the temperance workers in mitigating the evil, it will bring about better results. I think it will be useful if Government will subsidize temperance associations and institutions.

" I have no figures nor data, but it is my general impression that liquor shops are increasing in the city of Bombay, especially from E to G wards.

" The purse is generally controlled by men and not by women; earnings of males are spent by males; females have no control over them. So far as my experience goes they spend the whole amount on drink within three or four days and for the remaining days of the month they live on the earnings of their wives. For the purpose of having drink for the rest of the month they go to some Marwadi and borrow money. Liquor is also sold on credit. During Shimga holidays all men, women and children drink. I would not prefer the "on" shop system. I would prefer to allow people to take liquor home. Respectable people are not likely to go to shops and have drink there.

" By absolute prohibition I mean that liquor should be sold only for medical purposes.

" Advisory Committees must not only be advisory, but they must be invested with powers, and their resolutions should be carried out by Government officials

" Local option will be helpful if total prohibition is found impracticable.

" I think that excessive duties on articles of luxuries, such as provisions, etc., imported into India, should be imposed."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—" The average income of a labourer is Rs. 30 to 40.

" I believe that total prohibition is feasible within five or six years. There should be reduction of liquor in shops from 10 to 15 per cent. This is a very satisfactory method of approaching total prohibition.

" I am not in favour of local option. Instead of municipalities and local boards I would prefer Advisory Committees."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" By articles of luxury I mean articles which are not necessary.

" I am in favour of total prohibition. "

To Dr. Patil :—" Women alone should be given the right to vote.

" Both foreign and country liquors should be prohibited. They should be sold only for medicinal purposes.

" It will be a great advantage if Government will come forward with help in the present case and prohibit the liquor traffic altogether.

" I have no faith in picketing. It is the general impression that Government is more in favour of drink than in the welfare of workers. When Government authorities like Mr. Vincent, Police Commissioner, Mr. Harker, Deputy Police Commissioner, and Rao Bahadur Setalvad, Presidency Magistrate, were with us we were more successful in carrying out temperance propaganda among the masses.

" " I do not think it advisable that liquor shops should have more than one approach. "

## No. 13.

### Replies of Mr. S. J. TALEYARKHAN, Acting Superintendent of Salt and Excise, Bombay.

1. At present Acting Superintendent of Salt and Excise, Bombay Sub-Division, having worked as Inspector, Chief Inspector and Acting Assistant Collector of Excise in the different districts of the Presidency for more than 22 years, with a previous service of three years in the Opium Preventive Service.

2. My opinion generally regarding the Excise police of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 is (*a*) that it has worked satisfactorily and (*b*) that the actual results of the policy, as it has been carried out in practice, have also been equally satisfactory. The policy, though it has not put an altogether effective check on intemperance, has served to keep it within reasonable bounds, without interfering with the habits of those who use liquor in moderation. There has been absolutely nothing in the Government policy to encourage excess among those who drink or to throw temptation in the way of those who do not drink. The number of liquor shops has also been restricted as far as possible and their location periodically subjected to strict examination with a view to minimise the temptation to drink and to conform, as far as was reasonable, to public opinion. All possible effort has also been always made to secure that the liquor offered for sale was of good quality and not injurious to health.

3. As I do not advocate any change in the policy as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India referred to above, I have no suggestion to offer to improve upon the same, provided that the policy in question is strictly adhered to.

4. No. Nor do I consider it a practical measure.

5. As I am not in favour of prohibition, total or partial, I have nothing further to state in that connection.

6. There is some truth in the argument that prohibition, although it might not be effective in the present generation, will have a large influence on the next. But it is to be borne in mind at the same time that the numerous admitted evils, such as the probability of people taking to other intoxicants and far more deleterious drugs in the event of prohibition, will also have their influence on the next generation.

7. As I do not consider that the end to be arrived at should be the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor, I have nothing to state in reply to this query.

8. As I am opposed to the principle of prohibition, I have nothing to state in reply to this question also.

9. The best means to control consumption of all kinds of liquors and to gradually reduce it appears to be the spread of education and knowledge and the provision of counter attractions such as cold drink shops and other innocent amusements and lectures by temperance associations. Healthy home influences also would contribute towards this desirable end.

10. The constructive proposals in connection with the means suggested in question 10 for controlling consumption are as follows :—

(*a*) The rationing of shops should be to a certain limited extent only and not unduly pressed for fear of the legitimate consumption suffering at the cost of unduly large sales of inferior foreign liquors and other far more deleterious drugs taking the place of country liquor, also to prevent the far greater evils of illicit distillation and smuggling of liquor, resulting in loss of Government revenue without any corresponding benefit to the cause of temperance.

(*b*) The price of country liquor has in my opinion reached the limit now and should not be raised higher for the reasons stated in sub-paragraph (*a*) above.

(*c*) The reduction in shops should also be limited and gradual. In big cities any serious reduction would result in unduly benefitting a few at the expense of the many whose sole source of maintenance would be gone thereby, and in the district it would simply give rise to illicit distillation and other malpractices.

(*d*) I am against reducing the days of sale. The hours of the same may be restricted gradually not to give rise to discontent on the part of the consumers.

(*e*) The reduction of the strength has also now gone as far as possible, *viz.*, 40° U. P. strength and 60° U. P. strength, and there is no more room there now for any further reduction, especially in view of the fact that the much stronger inferior foreign liquor of 25° U. P. is and will always be ready to take the place of country liquor.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops in the mofussil may serve a useful purpose, but in a place like Bombay and other big cities the ever present difficulty of the dearth of suitable premises would make the task of regulating the location far difficult, if not impossible at times.

(*g*) Restricting the importation and sale of foreign liquor would certainly be beneficial in the cause of temperance. Its total prohibition is neither desirable nor practical for obvious reasons.

(*h*) I am not able to understand what kind of licenses are referred to in this clause.

(*i*) The present age limit of 16 for customers of liquor is quite reasonable for this country, where persons of that age and under have to earn their livelihood by labour.

(*j*) Subsiding temperance associations would not encourage temperance. Any money spent after it would be simply thrown away. Temperance can be encouraged by the means shown in the answer no. 9 above.

(*k*) Restricting or prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops would give rise to excessive drinking at shops, would interfere with the legitimate needs of the moderate consumer and would be invidious in the face of the fact that much inferior foreign liquor could be removed and stocked in any quantities. It will also cause great inconvenience to that respectable class of consumers who do not like to have their drink in the midst of low class crowds, which gather at a country liquor shop, and who therefore prefer to have their drink at home by sending for the same.

The above is a very comprehensive list of the means by which consumption can be controlled and I am not able to suggest any other means towards that end.

11. The principle of local option is objectionable in my opinion for many reasons. It would simply be a means of harassment in the hands of unscrupulous persons.

12. I would favour the suggestion of investing local bodies, *e.g.*, municipalities and district or taluka local boards, with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, provided the franchise is more widely extended so that the elected members represent a greater part of the population than they do at present and they undertake and are in a position to discharge the responsibility of raising any part of the revenue that would be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers in their areas.

13. The present Advisory Committees have not been found to be useful institutions. Mostly the members take hardly any interest in Abkari questions, as is clearly seen from the fact of a large number of them absenting themselves from the committee meetings, even though they are held at such long intervals and most of those, who attend, are hardly of any assistance in the solution of any important question. I am unable to suggest any change in the constitution of these committees by which they can be made useful.

14. Drink in moderation is not an evil in my opinion and it does not contribute to any increase in crime and can have no effect on the output of work. Drinking to excess is, however, a different question and this evil certainly contributes to an increase in crime and produces an adverse effect on the output of work.

15. I have not recommended any reduction or extinction of the Excise revenue and there is therefore no need to suggest other sources of revenue to make up the loss.

16. The use of opium and hemp drugs is sufficiently restricted at present for all practical purposes. The use of *charas* has been abolished throughout the Presidency from the 1st April next. Any further interference with the consumption of *ganja* and *bhang* will only pave the way for consumers to take to far more deleterious drugs, chiefly cocaine. The *bona-fide* consumption of opium is steadily declining; the large figures of consumption are simply due to the fact of licit opium being illicitly exported to foreign countries.

17. The custom of giving opium to children is still prevalent both in villages and cities, but to a much reduced extent than before. The practice exists mostly amongst the labouring classes, millhands and others. I am not in a position to say what effect this custom has on the death rate among children.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. TALEYARKHAN replied to the president:—"I have served in Khandesh, Nasik and Thana districts, for some time in Belgaum and Kaira districts. My experience is confined to these districts.

"In the event of total prohibition being adopted, not only will there be discontent in some communities in the East and West Khandesh and Nasik Districts but there will also be illicit distillation. In any circumstance they will have their drink. At present illicit importation is going on throughout the Nizam's territory. I know of instances in Dhulia where liquor shops have been removed as a result of demand made by the people. If the Advisory Committee's recommendation is reasonable—reasonableness to be determined by the Collector—it is generally carried out. The members of Advisory Committees are liable to be influenced by interested parties. I would put the blame at the doors of the members of Advisory Committees for not taking special interest in particular questions. I shall be glad if drink is stopped but not by any legislative measures. I cannot suggest any legislative action. I shall leave the question of prohibition to each individual's

desire rather than to the States undertaking this experiment. I might say that though I myself don't drink I am against prohibition by legislative measure.

"I have seen many temperance workers at work; they do not carry on their propaganda whole-heartedly. Local option work will be carried on on the lines on which Advisory Committees do their work. If the local option is carried out properly, I am in favour of local option. In villages men with greater influence will always succeed; so I would take objection to local option there. I have seen how elections of municipalities take place. My idea is that the qualifications should be lowered; the idea worth suggesting would be universal suffrage to man. For at present in talukas members are generally shets, sawkárs and big landlords. Every one should have a right to vote. Qualified males must have a vote each. In local option committees members will have to show the means how to make good the revenue lost by closing all excise shops; they will thus have to be more careful."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"I have 22 year's service. Illicit distillation is going on in East Khandesh. I have some experience about the Dharalas. By legislative action there will be some check on crime. Some deleterious drugs may take the place of illicit liquor. *Bhang* and *ganja* and cocaine are other deleterious drugs; *ganja* is more injurious. As I do not like the taste of liquor I do not drink it.

"Liquor smuggling is going on and I have detected hundreds of cases. In Malegaon, Khandesh and Nasik we were successful in checking it to some extent."

To Dr. Patil:—"I do not think that there should be any change in the policy. People will take *ganja* and cocaine in place of liquor.

"Personally I have no objection to the age limit of 18 years.

"I cannot say just yet what would be the effect of the prohibition of *charas* as it was stopped only a few days ago and the consumers have taken care to store their supplies to last them for some time at least."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"My experience is not confined to the mofussil alone. I know that the refreshment room at the Victoria Terminus Station is open day and night. During train time refreshment rooms are found to be an absolute necessity. In the case of this refreshment room the General Traffic Manager is the licensee. There is also a refreshment room at Kalyan."

## No. 14.

### Replies of the INDIAN MERCHANTS' CHAMBER AND BUREAU.

1. The Indian Merchants' Chamber is a representative body of Indian merchants in Western India. The present membership is 550.

2. The Excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of the 7th September 1905, my Committee regret to observe, has proved a failure in actual practice. My Committee are firmly of opinion that both Government and the people should have the goal of total prohibition before them. They mention that " the settled policy of Government was to minimise temptation to those who did not drink and to discourage excess among them who did ", and that " to the furtherance of this policy all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated ". My Committee believe they do not exaggerate when they say that in actual practice considerations of revenue, instead of being subordinated to the ideal Government have set before them, have reigned supreme, and it is this fact more than any others which the Committee believe has made the Excise policy of Government unpopular. In consequence of this subordination of the ideal to considerations of revenue, the policy laid down in 1905 has not resulted in any effective check being placed on intemperance. The consumption has steadily gone on increasing both in value and volume in spite of the many and frequent increases in duty charges.

3. The enunciation of the policy is good as said above but it should not be left at that. Government should whole-heartedly march towards the goal of prohibition, though the Committee recognize that two principal objections present themselves. There will be the loss to the revenue and there will be a danger of illicit distillation. My Committee think that in the public interests neither of the difficulties should stand in the way of attempts being made to reach the goal in as short time as possible. It is interesting to note that none of these difficulties has come in the way of even such States as the Chili and Urugway Republics from carrying forward the programme of total prohibition. There is before the Chillian Congress legislation proposing a reduction of production of alcoholic beverages at the rate of 20 per cent. a year for four years, and the removal of the tax upon non-alcoholic beverages made from grapes. It is proposed by this small but enterprising republic to turn vineyards into walnut fields and to devote the surplus of its income derived from its production of wines to training up people to fight against the drink evil and to gradually introduce other industries which will give the same revenue to the State as is at present given by the drink traffic. My Committee are of opinion that a similar work can be done with success by Government here if they apply themselves to achieving the goal of total prohibition in a stipulated period. Mhowra flowers are at present the principal raw material from which alcoholic preparations are made. It will be seen from the extracts from letters written by Mr. Bell, Director of Industries (copies of which have already been submitted by Mr. Purshotamdas Thakurdas, President of this Chamber, to the Committee) that these mhowra flowers can be utilized for making power alcohol. Government also can develop forest industries which have been so badly neglected up to this time.

4. My Committee are in favour of total prohibition, means for arriving at which goal have been described in the reply to question No. 3. The principal reasons for the belief of my Committee in total prohibition are the following :—

(*a*) All the different religions of India have placed drink under a ban.

(*b*) There is a consensus of opinion all the world over that the drink habit is pernicious and highly detrimental to the moral and material well-being of society, sapping away the foundation of all industries. A resolution with regard to this was passed by the First Session of the Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress, a copy of which is annexed herewith.

(*c*) The growing feeling against the drink evil in the country appears to suggest that its eradication will not prove very difficult.

(*d*) The beneficial effects of prohibition in other countries, notably in the United States of America where in the words of President Harding " in every community men and women have had an opportunity now to know what prohibition means." " They know," he proceeds, " that debts are more promptly paid ; that men take the wages that once were wasted in saloons ; that families are better clothed and fed and more money finds its way into the Savings Bank. The liquor traffic was destructive of much that was most precious in American life."

Regarding the second part of the question, if the United States of America has found it a practical measure, there is no reason why India, where the problem is much less acute than in America and the administrative machinery claimed to be most efficient, should not.

With regard to the steps which should be taken to bring about the desired end of the drink evil, my Committee suggest that Government should declare total prohibition as their definite goal, and in the meanwhile begin making use of the mhowra flowers for industrial purposes and developing forest industries so as to enable them to get the revenue which they are getting a

present from the drink traffic. If to help China in eradicating her opium evil Government should forego a revenue of about Rs. 8 crores, there is no reason why the Government of Bombay cannot attempt to forego its revenue of Rs. 4 crores in a definite period for the benefit of the people of this Presidency.

5. (*a*) and (*b*) If the illicit manufacture or smuggling of other articles has been and is being successfully prevented or checked, it does not stand to reason why alcoholic drinks should prove an exception.

(*c*) If the suppression of a custom like Suttee could be successfully carried out in spite of the strenuous opposition of the public on religious grounds, the danger of "serious discontent" in a case like the present should not exercise our brains at all. Again if the possibility of discontent generated by the forced establishment of liquor-shops against the expressed will of 75 per cent. of the population could not deter the administration from their determined policy, the feared discontent against temperance and even total prohibition can be treated as illusory.

(*d*) Most of "the other intoxicants and deleterious drugs" are perhaps not so baneful in their effects, or tempting or cheap enough, and the facilities to obtain them will also be restricted when the organized method of placing intoxicants in the way of the people is progressively done away with.

6. The effect of prohibition will undoubtedly be great on the present generation, but far greater on posterity. The complete working out of a course must of necessity take a long time.

7. Please refer to answer to question no. 8. My Committee would contract the quantity and gradually reduce it, say, 5 per cent. a year. But the success would depend on a sound use of mhowra flowers and other raw materials for non-alcoholic purposes.

8. Yes. The policy should apply to all intoxicants.

9. In the opinion of my Committee absolute prohibition is both feasible and desirable though it is a matter of time and it would be achieved by reducing quantities and increase in costs.

13. The existing Advisory Committees have proved themselves powerless and therefore unable to exercise any very appreciable influence on the checking of the evil.

14. The drink evil does contribute to an increase in crime and affects the output of work in industries.

15. Retrenchment, rigid economy, increased attention to starting and fostering forest industries and utilizing mhowra flowers for industrial purposes are some of the means which may be suggested to make up the loss of revenue suffered by Government.

My Committee cannot help stating that inasmuch as Government have gone against their own declared policy and raised huge revenues from such a pernicious evil, they are not now justified in putting before the critics of their Excise policy the financial aspect of the question.

16. These drugs should be controlled. My Committee believe that the use of hemp and opium has decreased since Government controlled the same. If this be correct, it would be interesting to find out how question nos. (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*) as mentioned in question no. 5 above by the Committee have been got over in the case of these two drugs.

*Copy of the Resolution referred to in no. 4 (b) of the replies of the Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau.*

"This Conference urges that, in view of the great benefits to trade and industry, which have already been secured by the United States of America, through their prohibition of liquor and in view of the fact that the efficiency and welfare of Indian labour have greatly suffered through the liquor traffic the Government of India should set before themselves the early adoption of the policy of total prohibition of the manufacture, import and sale of liquor in the country for intoxicating purposes."

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. PURSHOTAMDAS THAKURDAS, as representative of the Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau, replied to the President :—"I represent the Indian Merchants' Chamber. Mr. Mavji Govindji and myself were nominated by the Committee of the Chamber to give evidence before the Excise Committee. Mr. Mavji Govindji is unable to attend to-day. The written evidence of the Chamber has been given after full discussion in the Committee.

"I suggest that, as was done at the Fiscal Commission, I may be examined first as a representative of the Chamber and afterwards my personal views may be recorded.

"Experiments are being carried on for the purpose of converting mhowra flowers for industrial or power alcohol. My Committee very strongly feel that Government is not justified at any stage in looking upon excise as a justifiable source of revenue.

"I am afraid, I am not in a position to say which raw materials can be utilized for non-potable purposes. The mhowra flower is one which promises to be of some use, other than distillation of liquor.

"It is not a sound policy to count upon excise revenue as a necessity for meeting the expenditure of the Presidency.

"My Committee do not believe that total prohibition can be introduced by legislative enactment all at once. It can be done only gradually for practical purposes.

"I am not quite sure whether the principle of Government rationing liquor-shops and reducing its consumption by a certain quantity every year is a part of the settled policy of Government or whether the arrangement is in the nature of an experiment. If I can be assured that it is a policy which is to be followed consistently by Government, it will be a source of satisfaction to all. If it is only an experiment, it is not a thing on which the Presidency can be congratulated. The idea of my Committee is to reduce liquor consumption by 5 per cent. every year and thus bring about prohibition in sixteen years. Any apprehension to the effect that going below a certain limit in this matter would prove unfair to those who are in the habit of drinking should not be allowed to affect the enunciation of such policy. Government might appoint a Committee five years hence to enquire how the policy affects those who are in the habit of drinking.

"In a free country like America total prohibition exists to-day. In connection with prohibition I draw your attention to an extract from an article* recently published by the Right Honourable V. S. Sastri in the *Servant of India* dated the 27th April 1922, which shows that there is no difference of opinion in America itself as to the success of prohibition there. It is stated therein that some people who have been teetotallers before the introduction of prohibition have taken to drinking in America as a protest against the enactment on the ground that it interferes with the liberties of the people, but such sentiments may not be regarded seriously. As to the fear expressed by certain official witnesses that prohibition will lead to an enormous amount of illicit distillation and importation, I think it is due to nervousness on the part of Government officers. It is natural, but it can be discounted to a certain extent. Personally I give weight to the views of the official of the Salvation Army, who was examined the other day by the Committee. There are good grounds for doubting the accuracy of the statement of Government officials. Any solicitude that might be shown by Government for Bhils in West Khandesh, Kolis in Nasik and for the Dharalas and the Portuguese who will be discontented as a result of total prohibition is to be admired; but it is to be remembered that when Government brought the opium traffic under its control it did not apprehend any such effect upon an important class of people like the Rajputs, who are warlike and in the habit of using opium. I attach very little importance to this apprehension.

"I am not of opinion that the religious feelings of any community will be wounded if prohibition is brought about. For example most sections of the Hindoos are religiously forbidden to take liquor. I do not think that any religion makes it necessary to have wine compulsory in poojas. Liquor can be used for medicinal purposes. Christian priests who require wine for religious purposes can be made an exception.

"Personally I have no experience of Advisory Committees in Bombay. According to some persons these Advisory Committees do not seem to exercise large power and influence. They never exercise their independent judgment but say *ditto* to what the officials urge. They are not at all representative of the people.

"I will give an instance. At Dakore, which is the principle place of pilgrimage in Gujarat, a liquor-shop was opened next to the well-known temple there, a thing that was never heard of there. As a trustee of certain funds and the temple I represented the matter to the Excise Commissioner and it took 15 months to remedy the grievance. That is the sort of consideration they give to such matters. The popular opinion is that the intentions of the Government of India as expressed in their Resolution have not been correctly interpreted in action.

"Dr. K. E. Dadachanji refused to work on the Corporation when the Corporation sanctioned the location of a liquor shop near a fire-temple.

"I do not like to express any views of the Chamber with regard to the question of local option, but I shall answer that question in my personal capacity.

"Drink affects the output of work very considerably. It happens that when a mill opens after a holiday, such as Shimga or Diwali, the whole number of men do not turn up. Half the men suffer from the after effects of drink and the output suffers."

"It is an unfortunate coincidence that the Excise Committee should sit when the Government of Bombay have a deficit. There is already a general cry for reduction in the present expenditure. I do not think any further taxation is possible. This is my general opinion."

To Mr. Madon:—"Government have tapped every possible source of revenue and not a single source has been left untouched, so very resourceful they are. As regards the succession

* *Vide* post.

duty I think that taxation should not be carried to a point when people will think of avoiding it. If a succession duty be imposed, people might be driven to settle their property on their heirs before their deaths. My Committee is against any increase in taxes. Government have already exceeded limits in this matter. My Committee is of opinion that Government is not justified in looking upon excise revenue as a regular part of the revenues of the Presidency. Government should have appointed a Committee like this years back to consider the question. Unfortunately the year in which the Committee has been appointed coincides with a deficit. My Committee is not prepared to recommend any substitute for the excise revenue, but feel Government should try to cut down their expenditure and meet it by making retrenchment and fostering forest industries."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Nobody represents liquor trade in the Chamber. There is one member from the Alembic Chemical Works.

"I have no experience of the American machinery.

"If any profit is gained out of the successful utilization of mhowra flowers, it may be considered excise revenue so far as the Bombay Government is concerned."

To Dr. Patil :—"One cannot criticise too much the Excise Department in regard to the location of liquor-shops in prominent places, specially in the mill area. The shops should be kept as far away as possible from mills and factories and pilgrim centres. They should be kept open during hours when the workmen cannot go there without sacrificing some part of their day's wages.

"Total prohibition must be applied to both country and foreign liquors.

"Twenty-one should be the limit of age for people being allowed to be served in liquor-shops."

*The Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri's article in the "Servant of India", dated the 27th April 1922, referred to in Mr. Purshotamdas Thakurdas's oral evidence.*

## IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA.

### The Working of Prohibition.

The impressions of a teetotaller on the efficacy of prohibition in the United States are not good for much. But one heard so much on the subject during the Conference on the Limitation of Armaments that it might conceivably be of interest to our readers in India, where so many eager minds are directed to the total prevention of drink. Controversy is still bitter in the United States as is to be expected where vested interests and habits have acquired great intensity. Opinion therefore on the spot is varied and even contradictory. One even heard of an early repeal of the Prohibition Law—and of the attempts made in several parts of the continent to stir up an agitation with that view. Others like the workers of the Y. M. C. A. and other enthusiasts were sanguine that prohibition was striking root in the moral sentiments of the people and that the shrinking of facilities for drunkenness would complete the good work. One odd feature of the situation which illustrates perhaps the perversity of human nature was that every now and then one came across an earnest man and woman who declared that he or she had been a teetotaller before the Prohibition Law but had subsequently taken to drink as a protest against the interference of that Law with the freedom of the individual. The reformer cites the abolition of the saloon as a gain of inestimable value to the cause of sobriety. The factory owner and the farmer reap immense advantage from the disappearance of this institution and they may be trusted to resist to the utmost its revival in any shape or form. The contemptuous view of prohibition which one hears so often in certain circles of Europe is derived from a limited observation of the conditions obtaining in the large towns and the eastern sea board. Here the enormous wealth of the population and the facilities for smuggling combine to make drink available to those that ardently seek it in hotels and restaurants. At private parties too people draw on the hoards of wealthy citizens which are supposed to be immense. In the west and middle west, however, which are often represented as the real America these opportunities for the maintenance of the old habit do not exist and prohibition seems to be fairly effective. On a large view of the matter the prospects of the Dry Law even on the East Coast are not gloomy. The very fact that drink except in private houses has to be indulged in secretly constitutes a great hindrance and must tend in the long run to the disappearance of the evil. Then at all public and semi-public functions in which the great officials take part no wine is served, its place being taken by a medicinal beverage which is called whiterock. To the students of human affairs this fact would constitute a second big hindrance. The greatest hope of the reformer remains to be mentioned. It resides in the probability that the new generations of Americans uncorrupted by the habits of their fathers and grandfathers will grow up in an atmosphere of respect for the Prohibition Law and the present defects in its working will be made up for by the willing acquiescence of the citizens of the future.

## No. 15

REPLIES OF MR. PURSHOTAMDAS THAKURDAS, C.I.E., M.B.E., M.L.C.

1. Profession—Merchant. My opinion on this question is based on my interest in same from the point of view of the public at large and as a member of the Bombay Legislative Council since 1916.

2. The policy as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India reads correct (barring total prohibition), inasmuch as it is stated to be "to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do". Whether the practical effect of the policy has been such or not may be a contentious point on which a large section of the public at least seem to have very strong views; for, although the Government of India said, "all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated to the furtherance of this policy", some at least of the steps of the Government have, even though unintentionally, offered more facilities for the liquor traffic. I do not overlook that before Government took excise in their control there must have been a good deal of distillation, and, as no figures for this can be available any efforts at comparison must fail, and therefore it is impossible to find out whether consumption of alcoholic drinks has increased *per capita* or not since, say, 1850. The popular impression of the actual results of the Government policy is to the effect that the excise policy of Government has increased the consumption of liquor. The impression however is based on the belief it may be said, hardly justified, that illicit distillation 30 to 40 years back was a s little as it is to-day. I should not be surprised, however, if Government contended that illici t distillation was brought under control only gradually and could not have been all checked at the very start of the excise policy.

3. As said under question 2 the enunciation of the policy leaves little to be desired, excepting the ideal good. The goal has not been mentioned as "total prohibition" as early as possible. Government should whole-heartedly work towards the goal of prohibition, but to that end two main difficulties appear: (1) the first is what about loss of the excise revenue to the treasury? and (2) even supposing such loss could be stood by the finances of each province how would Government be able to assure themselves that there would be no illicit distillation or temptation at it. I propose to reply to both these questions jointly. I personally fear that for many years to come Government will need a substitute for the excise revenue. I therefore think that the only *practical* way out of the difficulty is to use the raw material for liquor for some industrial purpose. A good deal has been heard lately regarding the use of mhowra flowers for industrial alcohol. I enclose herewith copies of information supplied to me by the Director of Industries, Bombay. The subject presents difficulties at the present stage, but considering the large quantities of mhowra flowers, etc., available in the country, at fairly cheap rates, there is every reason to believe that some industrial use for them could be discovered if a thorough and systematic enquiry were instituted. This subject is of sufficient importance to warrant the appointment by the Government of India of best experts from any part of the world to enquire into the industrial possibilities of the mhowra and other raw materials now used in liquor distillation. The only practical method of preventing illicit distillation and of discouraging (and ultimately prohibiting) the use of liquor, is to make the raw materials for these fairly costly by diverting them to other productive industrial channels, and for this purpose the spending of even a few lakhs of rupees by Government on enquiry by experts and industrialists would be fully justifiable. I have full faith that if such a patient enquiry is made an economical method of utilizing mhowra, etc., can be discovered, to the discouragement of distillation for intoxicating liquors. Until such a use for the raw material for liquor is discovered it is hardly reasonable to consider the possibility of a great reduction in liquor consumption by legislation or executive order.

It is however necessary to bear in mind that the ideal position would be total prohibition. That this is most feasible in India with the religious ban against liquor according to Hindu and Moslem religions is a truism. Though total prohibition may be considered an ideal, it is being genuinely striven after in America, Uruguay and Chile. I quote the following from the *Christian Herald* of 4th March 1922 :—

> "The battle-cry of the party that placed President Alessandri in office was, *Pese a quien pese* (Cost what it may) and this slogan reflects the spirit of the man who before his inauguration as President dared to say :—
>
> 'I am not afraid to say that cost what it may the future President of Chile will do battle with undying energy for the saving of the race from alcoholism, the white slave traffic and the social evils that are undermining our people, a race for which we are justly proud.... When I say I will wage war against alcoholism, I start by preaching by my acts as well as by my words. As luck would have it, I became owner some years ago of a hundred and twenty-five square metres of vineyards, and in consequence of my convictions I had it all uprooted and walnut trees planted in its place. Why cannot others do what I, a modest

citizen, have done ? What is a statesman's duty under the circumstances ? He must face the problem not in an analytical way, but by transforming the vine industries in such a fashion that we may produce pure fruit-juices and not poisonous liquors, with great benefits to the people, the country and the producers.....

'The moral interests of the country must be above the material interests of the individual, and I am ready to say that if we cannot transform the liquor productions into non-alcoholic beverages, I would not hesitate to propose to buy up, on the State's account, the alcoholic industry, and so put a stop to the poisoning of the race'."

It is more than likely that the crusade started in the West against alcohol may not succeed fully all at once. But every failure will mean improvement in the details of the campaign and the correct policy being one of prohibition it is sure to succeed eventually.

In the meantime, the question of loss of revenue to the State is the most deplorable aspect of the policy of the State. The whisky money, or tainted money as it may be called, should never have been looked upon as a legitimate source of income to the State. Things being what they are, however, I have nothing more to suggest than what I have done above.

The opium revenue of India was considerable. It was foregone out of consideration for a foreign nation. Is the claim of the Indians themselves on their Government's solicitude for their moral and material welfare any the less cogent ?

4. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) For reasons of health, happiness and prosperity of the people at large.

(*c*) Yes, in course of time.

(*d*) See reply to question No. 3 above.

6. I think the argument is correct.

7. See question No. 3 above. I would contract the quantity and gradually reduce it, say, 5 per cent. a year. But the success of this would depend on the sound use of mhowra and other raw materials for non-alcoholic purposes.

8. Yes. The policy should apply to all intoxicants. But I am not aware of the intoxicating qualities of toddy nor its comparison with liquor.

9. Reduce the quantity and increase the cost.

14. Drink beyond a moderate extent does increase crime and affects useful output of work.

15. See question No. 3 above.

16. These should be controlled as at present. My impression is that the use of hemp and opium has decreased since Government controlled the same. If this be correct, it would be interesting to find out how objections nos. (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*) mentioned in question 5 above by the Committee have been got over in the case of these two drugs. I would discuss this with the Committee on their informing me as regards this at my interview with them.

*Extracts from a letter written by the Director of Industries on Power Alcohol in August 1921:*

It is as well to make clear at the outset that at the present time power alcohol has no chance of competition with petrol if the oil companies care to fight. I have a fairly good knowledge and experience of the mineral oil trade in India. The whole oil trade is really a vast monopoly and as regards petrol, the companies admittedly take the last anna which they can get from the user. Ten years ago the Burmah Oil Company burned petrol in the nallahs around Yenangyaung to get rid of it, and, regarded as a bye product, petrol can still be sold at well under 4 annas a gallon f.o.b. power Rangoon and made to pay. If a means were divided of flooding India with alcohol at one rupee a gallon the oil companies could extinguish the industry, if they cared, by selling petrol at 10 annas a gallon. Of course their profits would be less but they would still be making a profit.

2. But circumstances are gradually changing. The supply of petrol is still in excess of the demand but this state of affairs is not anticipated to last more than say another 15 years. Power alcohol is bound to come and so far as I can make out the oil companies look benevolently upon the progress it is making so long as there is not too much of it meantime. They are certainly watching it and may eventually control its production, which is inevitable if motor transport increases at the present rate.

3. The Burmah Oil Company is now actively interested in the manufacture of power alcohol and Sir Charles Bedford is conducting investigations on their behalf or at least with their assistance. He recently gave a lecture before the Royal Society of Arts, London, on the subject. I can send you a copy if you care but there is really nothing substantial in it to lay hold of. There are no indications of costs. The material under investigation is rice *straw*.

* * * * * *

6. * * * The large imports into India of methylated spirits from Java (200,000 to 300,000 gallons annually) show that industrial or power alcohol made in India from mhowra

cannot ordinarily compete with imported alcohol for the same purpose. It is true that the price of mhowra has since fallen but as molasses is a waste product the Java manufacturers are in a very strong position and the use of imported molasses as a base for the manufacture in India of power alcohol will frequently be more advantageous than the use of mhowra. It is true that in Hyderabad State steps are being taken to produce power alcohol from mhowra but this state seems to be specially favoured with *large* supplies of *cheap* mhowra while imported alcohol, to compete locally, must bear railway charges. In any event the Hyderabad scheme has not yet proved itself. So far as I can judge the danger of a shortage of supply of mhowra with a consequent rise in price makes the production of power alcohol possible * * only on a limited scale.

* * * * * * *

9. The mixture to be made at Hyderabad is Natalite which is a mixture of 50 per cent. alcohol (from mhowra) and 50 per cent. ether *plus* ½ per cent. ammonia. It is a South African patent and from time to time individuals who seem to be interested in it pass through Bombay. One is here now and he tells me that Hyderabad are not yet producing and that their possible output will be 300,000 gallons annually. The only information about mhowra given in the report of the Alcohol Motor Fuel Committee has reference to the Hyderabad scheme. Here it is :—

> "We have received interesting evidence from the Director of Commerce and Industries to H. E. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad (Deccan) concerning achieved production costs and yields of power alcohol from the flowers of the mahua tree (Bassia latifolia), which flourishes in the Central Provinces as well as in Hyderabad. The witness stated that the sun-dried flowers of this tree contain on the average 60 per cent. by weight of fermentable sugar, that they can be collected and delivered to the factory in the zone of growth at £1 10*s*. per ton and that the yield on proper fermentation and distillation is found to be about 90 gallons of alcohol (95 per cent. by volume absolute) per ton. He further stated that the flowers can be pressed, packed, exported, and stored for long periods without deterioration. We also understand that cultivation of the mahua tree has not as yet been attempted, and that there may, therefore, be possibilities of increased production of flowers by cultural treatments."

The report was issued in 1919, so exchange was probably taken at 1/4 in arriving at the figure of £1 10*s*. per ton.

* * * *

11. I am very doubtful whether the manufacture of power alcohol will be a commercial proposition on this side of India until a sugar industry is widely established and large supplies of molasses are available. There are too many weaknesses in the supply of mhowra. A big supply is difficult to secure ; the crop may fail ; the collecting season is short ; the price is sometimes prohibitive ; and shortage requires careful supervision ; it is significant that Sir Charles Bedford has abandoned cereals and the much advertised mhowra for rice straw.

12. "Natalite" is reported to be likely to make a start in the United Kingdom. At Durban the output is two million gallons annually. It is also made in East Africa. At Durban I understand the base is molasses. * * * * *

*Extracts from another letter written by the Director of Industries on Power Alcohol after a few days.*

I have had another talk with Mr. Munroe who is the individual who is trying to introduce natalite into India. He tells me that he owns the sole right of producing natalite in India and that he is trying to form companies for its manufacture. You may take his figures therefore as exceedingly optimistic and requiring very careful check.

2. Speaking from memory Mr. Munroe said that the yield of 95 per cent. alcohol from one ton mhowra was 70 gallons and from one ton broken rice 83 gallons. The first figure is much below the estimate of 90 gallons given by the Director of Commerce and Industries, Hyderabad, in the extract which I quoted in my last letter.

3. As to cost of manufacture Mr. Munroe said that he can produce 95 per cent. alcohol at cost of one anna per gallon for every Rs. 5 paid per ton mhowra. He also confirms the suggestion in my last letter that the Hyderabad people in estimating the cost of mhowra at £1 10*s*. per ton for delivery at the factory were quoting a figure equivalent to Rs. 22-8-0. On this basis the alcohol should cost them 4½ annas per gallon but Mr. Munroe admits that their own estimate of working cost is eight annas per gallon and it is to be recollected that this estimate has not yet been realised in practice. The plant at Hyderabad seems to have arrived but no attempt has yet been made to erect it.

4. If Hyderabad can deliver its mhowra at the factory at Rs. 22-8-0 per ton it is very lucky. Mr. Munroe says he can buy mhowra in the collecting areas at Re. 1 per maund, *i.e.* Rs. 27 per ton ; and to this must be added the cost of delivery at the factory. In recent years the lowest rate for mhowra in Bombay has been Rs. 2-8-0 per maund. At present it is Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 3-12-0 per maund (of 80 lbs.). As I have already mentioned the year before last it was very dear in Bombay and the price rose to Rs. 6-8-0 per maund. * * on a rough guess

I should think it unlikely that mhowra can be delivered at the * * factory under the very best conditions at less than Rs. 2 per maund, *i.e.*, Rs. 54 per ton, which even on Mr. Munroe's basis means that 95 per cent. alcohol will cost eleven annas per gallon.

* * * *

## NOTE.

*Industrial Alcohol. Power Alcohol.*

Mr. McDonald, Deputy Commissioner of Excise, has given me the following figures :—

Mhowra is at present Rs. 2 to Rs. 2-8-0 per maund, delivered at factory. He assumes that in future it will be generally obtainable at Rs. 2.

(*Note.*—This is pitching it pretty low.)

Output of proof alcohol is 4 proof gallons per maund, *i.e.*, each proof-gallon costs 8 annas for material. Cost of manufacture is taken as 5 annas. Total 13 annas. To this Mr. McDonald adds 60 % for bringing up the strength of the proof alcohol—Total 20·8 annas. To this must be added cost of denaturing.

He thinks that product can be sold in Bombay at Re. 1-7-0 per gallon.

Four proof gallons per maund seems a large output.

Khanapur gets 3·8 gallons. With good plant he thinks 4 gallons are obtainable.

He says that the actual cost of production at Khanapur is 7 annas per gallon (in addition to cost of material) for an output of 300,000 gallons. With an output of 2,000,000 gallons he thinks that cost can be reduced to 5 annas. I think this is reasonable.

He does not think that in any event there is material available for the production of more than 3,000,000 gallons.

I think his case weak in assuming that mhowra will always be obtainable at as a low a figure as even Rs. 2-8-0 per maund, if it goes higher he says that Java molasses can be used. These at present cost about 6*s.* 6*d.* per cwt. (*f. o. b* or *c. i. f.*, apparently the former). The output of proof alcohol from molasses is taken to be 4·5 gallons per maund.

But even on Mr. McDonald's own figures giving final cost as 20·8 annas per gallon at factory before denaturing prospects are risky. Effective distribution will be more costly than he estimates.

The International Sugar Journal in its articles puffing up natalite takes the cost of molasses at one penny per gallon (= 3 as. per maund) and coal at £1 per ton. We cannot get near these figures in India.

As carburettors will have to be adjusted for power alcohol motor car owners who cannot be sure of obtaining their supplies always at the same depôt will rely on petrol which will be obtainable anywhere.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. PURSHOTAMDAS THAKURDAS replied to the President :—" Myself being a teetotaller I am not in a position to answer whether toddy is less harmful than country liquor.

" If the system of local option can be tried I have no doubt that 30 per cent. of the shops will be closed at once. It is fully worth trying.

" Surat and Panch Mahals Districts are addicted to drinking. It is true that one-third of the revenue from Excise is contributed by the City of Bombay. Ahmedabad, Sholapur and Jalgaon also contribute a considerable amount."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—" I think it will be rather over-riding America if I will go in for 20 per cent. reduction."

To Mr. B. V. Jadhav :—" I have not thought over any means of making up the loss of 4½ crores of rupees. I feel it will be very difficult.

" In the initial stages of prohibition we will have to be very careful."

## No. 16

### Replies of Mr. HANSRAJ PRAGJI THACKERSEY of Bombay.

1. I am a mill agent, I employ about four thousand hands. This has given me an opportuni ty to observe the effects of the liquor traffic.

2. (*a*) The policy of non-intervention in the habits and customs of the people as declared in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001—Exc. of 7th September 1905 may be considered good at the time of declaration, but it cannot be held so at the present time. India has progressed much in the last few years and it cannot rest contented with the present state of its moral progress. The moral progress of the country must keep pace with its material advancement. Government therefore cannot be expected to keep a neutral attitude in so vital a point as the liquor traffic.

(*b*) The actual working out of the policy as evidenced from Government figures is not in any way encouraging. There is very little reduction in the quantity of liquor consumed, while there is a substantial increase in the amount of the revenue derived from excise duty. The present policy therefore cannot be said to have attained the minimum of consumption, though it may have attained the maximum of revenue. It has failed to put any check whatsoever on the consumption.

3. I am of opinion that Government should avowedly declare its intention of undertaking gradual reduction of consumption till it reaches a particular limit.

4. Theoretically I am in favour of total prohibition. But looking to the difficulties of carrying it out in practice I would rest myself contented if adequate measures were taken by Government to reduce the present consumption to its possible minimum.

5. (*a*) Strict vigilance on the part of the Excise Department will go a long way in solving the much dreaded difficulty of illicit production.

(*b*) As Indian States and Portuguese Government are in treaty with the British Government suitable arrangements can be made so that the reduction of consumption in liquor can be effected.

(*c*) As far as my experience goes there is no cause of apprehension on the part of Government of any serious discontent arising from a partial prohibition of liquor. Customs and habits of long standing can be improved by the spread of education and temperance propaganda.

(*d*) I think the Preventive establishment will pay itself for a long time to come and even if it does not do so I would not mind such expenditure in the cause of temperance. If the establishment is well regulated and properly supervised, there is no reason to fear illegal exactions.

(*e*) All alternative forms of intoxicants should be controlled, if not monopolized, by Government.

6. If persistent efforts are made to carry out prohibition, I hope for a day when these effects will be fructified.

7. As I have said in my reply to question no. 2, the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor should be aimed at, and all kinds of measures, legislative or otherwise, should be taken promptly, even if the goal cannot be reached in the near future. Government may raise the price of liquor so as to make the drink habit a luxury. There are temperance societies in the Presidency at present and there will be many more in future. I am of opinion that their strenuous propaganda will be successful to induce various communities to look down upon the man given to drinking. As it is the intention of Government to make primary education compulsory, I believe it will create a moral effect to further the cause of temperance. The cause of temperance can also be facilitated by introducing text books in schools which would depict the evils of intemperance. The latter step must be introduced immediately.

8. In the light of the present day circumstances the principle of prohibition may be applied strictly to both. I am against the prohibition of toddy. This sort of drinking is not so much injurious. It is said that toddy is a nutritious food.

9. I would recommend the following means to control the consumption of all kinds and thereby to reduce it gradually :—

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) To increase the price of liquor exorbitantly so as to make it an article of luxury, and therefore may not come within the easy reach of labouring class.

(*c*) The number of shops should be reduced as far as possible.

(*d*) The location of shops should, as a rule, be far away from industrial areas. The shops in these areas are a standing temptation to drinkers on the margin.

(*e*) Liquor should not be available on all week days, particularly on holidays. The days and hours of sale should be so regulated as to make it inconvenient for a majority of drunkards to visit the shop.

(*f*) I am in favour of regulating the location of shops.

(*g*) It is not practicable to stop the importation and sale of foreign liquor. The poor class hardly takes to this sort of drink. The importation of foreign liquor brings to Government a decent revenue. As Government is likely to lose a huge amount of revenue from the duty on country-made liquors by reducing the quantity of consumption, this loss can be partially relieved by enhancing the customs duty on the importation of foreign liquor.

(*h*) The number of licenses should be decreased.

(*i*) I strongly recommend that age limit should be strictly imposed by the Legislature so that a man under eighteen and women in general be prohibited totally.

(*j*) Temperance associations should be fully supported by Government and, if need be, be helped very materially.

(*k*) Yes.

The measures suggested above for controlling consumption will be effective if they are carried out in right earnest with the help of the legislature. I would go further and say that Government should extend their help to temperance societies to start cinemas, etc., in industrial areas showing the evils of drinking. A series of lectures be arranged under the supervision of the Educational Department. Hand bills and leaflets of educative nature be freely distributed among the masses.

11. I would favour the principle of local option and the best means to ascertain it would be the adoption of a plebiscite.

12. At present the municipality, and district and taluka local boards have very little voice in determining the number and location of shops. I am in favour of investing full powers in these bodies. The question of raising any part of the revenues is so wide that it requires a very careful consideration on the part of these bodies as well as Government. Government is in a position to make up the deficits sustained by losing the revenue from Excise through other resources. The income of municipalities and local boards is very limited. The population under them is very poor and hence it is impossible for these bodies to recover anything more by way of taxation.

13. The Advisory Committees at present are Committees in name only; practically, they have no power at all. The members are nominated by Government. The Collector of Customs consults these members when he chooses to do so. Thus, the appointment of the Committees has proved futile. It requires a vast change. There should be a body, instead of an Advisory Committee, where the principle of election be adopted. The right of election should be given to public institutions with the Collector of Customs as the head. For other districts similar bodies be established.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to increase in crime. It produces an adverse effect on the output of work.

15. No doubt the revenue of Government from excise will be considerably reduced, but I am of opinion that the reduction will not be so large an amount as Government apprehends. In case the result is quite contrary, Government have ample resources to make good the loss by such taxation as may not fall upon the poor heavily. There will be none in the world so degraded as would desire to prefer to see his countrymen suffering from the evils of drinking.

16. Opium and hemp drugs should not take the place of liquor. Strong measures should be taken for these drugs by the Legislature.

17. I hold that the custom of giving opium to young children is almost eliminated from the higher and middle classes and that it is now confined to the lower ignorant people. Spread of education will lead, I feel sure, to the disappearance of this injurious habit from the lower classes also. I hold that this custom of giving opium to young ones, among other causes, is responsible for the appalling death rate prevailing in the country.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. HANSRAJ PRAGJI THACKERSEY replied to the President:—There are five mills under my management; I employ about 4,000 hands. I have no special organizations like clubs, recreations or welfare work.

"Government's object is all the while to make reduction, but there is no appreciable reduction. If the policy of Government is carried out in a true spirit, then in that case the consumption can be reduced. It cannot be reduced even though the present still-head duty prices were doubled.

"I am entirely in favour of total prohibition; if it is not practicable, the use of liquor should be reduced to the minimum.

"Total prohibition should be affected by legislative enactment. I do not think that prohibition of liquor from 1st January 1923 by legislative action can have a great effect; of course

it will have some effect. Prohibition cannot be brought into force immediately but it can be done gradually; it can be put into force within a certain time. If a person be then found to drink in that case he can be punished according to the law. From 1st January 1928 total prohibition will be possible.

" My experience is only confined to the City of Bombay. I think toddy may be allowed. I am in favour of all the remedies proposed in question 10.

" My opinions on Advisory Committees are as per paragraph 13 of my written evidence.

" As regards taxation, people will have to bear the burden to some extent. I am in favour of a certain tax on the poor, if it is light."

To Mr. Madon :—" Low class women are addicted to drinking.

" I am not in a position to say whether there will be discontent and danger if foreign liquor is stopped.

" If Government desires to stop entirely the consumption of liquor, the expenditure will be met. Even after total prohibition illicit distillation will go on to a large extent. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" It will be for the Government Department to find how to meet the expenditure of the Preventive establishment. I cannot say whether the consumption will be increased if temperance societies are stopped. Men are contributing to the Social Service League.

" I think that employers of labour should be taxed because when the drinking habit of the labourers will cease to exist they will be working efficiently."

To Dr. Patil :—" Toddy is not so injurious. I am told stale toddy is harmful. I cannot say whether saccharin and soap-nuts are added to the stale toddy to give it the appearance of fresh toddy. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I have had no opportunities of observing the effects of the influence of liquor on the labourers employed by me. I cannot say whether there are any teetotallers in my mills. Total prohibition should be introduced into this Presidency as early as possible. Liquor should be reduced by 10 per cent. every year. A large number of shops are located in the mill area—larger than necessary.

" I cannot say whether fermented toddy contains 20 per cent. or 15 per cent. of alcohol.

" I do not object to plebiscite. The decision of the people should decide the matter."

No. 17

REPLIES OF MR. D. H. GAVANKAR, B.A., L.M.& S., PRESIDENT, BASSEIN MUNICIPALITY.

1. I am a medical practitioner and naturally get ample opportunities to come in close contact with all grades of society.

2. (*a*) My opinion is that the Government Excise policy is not good for India inasmuch as it does not aim at total prohibition.

(*b*) Judging from the actual results of the policy as seen in Bassein, I can say that it is a total failure as far as this place is concerned.

3. I am for a radical change in the policy of Government and I suggest that it should aim at driving out drunkenness from India.

4. Yes. I am in favour of total prohibition and my reasons are these :—

(*a*) Drinking is one of the banes to society. It kills happiness in sweet homes ; it lowers the moral character of men all round ;

(*b*) India is populated mainly by the Hindus and the Mahomedans and drinking is forbidden by the religions of both these great communities of India ;

(*c*) Medically, alcohol does harm to the human constitution ;

(*d*) The habit has been engrafted on India and the graft which sucks the nation's life must be removed.

I consider that total prohibition is a practical measure. I suggest the following method for carrying it out :—

(*a*) Every year the supply of liquor should be cut off by 10 per cent. so that in 10 years time there will be complete prohibition ; the importation of foreign liquor should also be diminished every year ;

(*b*) During these ten years, the public mind should be prepared for total prohibition, by anti-drink propaganda. The public will most heartily co-operate with Government in this.

5. (*a*) Any attempt to obtain liquor by illicit means should be mercilessly punished.

(*b*) If Government adopts this policy suggested by me, I think the States will adopt Government policy. There will remain the difficulty of enforcing it in districts bordering on Portuguese territory ; but this will be a negligible quantity.

(*c*) Some provision may be made for supplying liquor to these "certain classes" in the beginning but this provision should be extremely meagre and the cost prohibitive for its ordinary use.

(*d*) Illicit distillation must be sternly put down and preventive establishment must be maintained. Illegal exactions should be most severely punished.

(*e*) The tendency of the people to take to other intoxicants can be counteracted by a robust propaganda.

6. Yes. The next generation will be most beneficially affected, because it will be born in an atmosphere free from the liquor vapours.

7. For making total prohibition a success both legislation and public education are necessary.

8. I would not prohibit fresh toddy or shindi.

10. In order to carry out successfully total prohibition in ten years, as recommended by me, all the measures enumerated here from (*a*) to (*k*) are quite necessary and also local option.

11. I am in favour of local option. When 75 per cent. of the population of any locality apply that there should not be any liquor-shop in that locality, I think theirs is a very strong case for getting such a right. In municipalities where the qualifying tax for a voter is going to be annas 8 only, *i. e.*, practically every house will exercise a vote, the voters list should be taken to represent the whole population.

12. No. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number of shops, when the principle of local option as recommended by me is adopted. As regards the location of shops, I think municipalities should be given the necessary power of determining the area. Municipalities and local boards should not be asked to make good the loss incurred by decreasing the number of shops, even when the power of decreasing is delegated to them.

13. I have no experience of these advisory committees.

14. Yes. It does contribute to an increase in crime and has an injurious effect on the output of work. The Municipal Assistant Surgeon says the majority of assault cases occur after a free indulgence in drink.

15. The deficit should be met by—

(*a*) requesting the Central Government to contribute a portion, which it can do, if military expenditure is curtailed.

(*b*) imposing a special education cess.

16. No. I have no special remarks to make.

17. Here I give the opinion of the Municipal Assistant Surgeon with whom I fully agree :—

" The custom of giving opium to infants is prevalent mainly among the lower classes; the mother goes off when the child is sleeping after a dose of opium and I am of opinion that it increases the mortality among the infants. "

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. GAVANKAR replied to the President :—" I have been in Bassein and am connected with the municipality for the last eight years.; I am a native of Bassein. I have not much connection with the interior of the taluka. Villages round about Bassein. contain a large percentage of drunkards. Indian Christians known as *malis* form the bulk of the population on the southern side of the Bassein Town for nearly 10 miles along the coast line. They are agriculturists and grow *pan*, plantain and vegetables. They are a well-to-do community and are the greatest drinking class in the Bassein Taluka. In point of the drink habit next come the Kolis, Agris, Bhandaris and Marathis. Kolis are addicted to drink to a large extent; the Agris, the Bhandari community and the Marathas are addicted to it to a less extent. The Bhandaris are tappers. They manufacture and sell *bidis*. They take country liquor, *rashi* 60° U.P. and *bevda* 30° U.P. I am not against toddy if it is unfermented; after 4 hours it begins to ferment. Toddy is drawn in the morning; by 10 o'clock it is almost finished. Toddy if taken fresh is nutritious and good. I have seen pots; I do not know whether they put cowdung inside the pot. But I know they add water and saccharin. I am of opinion that total prohibition should be effected within 10 years. Educational propaganda should be introduced. Lectures, temperance associations and cinema demonstrations should be arranged. The public mind should be prepared against drink by all these measures. As the people have nothing else to occupy their minds with they are after drink; this is one of the factors. Total prohibition should come gradually. I am in favour of local option. When 75 per cent. of the population of any locality apply that, there should not be any liquor shop in that locality, I think there is a very strong case for getting such a right. I do not think that the people are incapable of exercising their rights.

" I am not in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number of shops, when the principle of local option as recommended by me is adopted. As regards the location of shops, I think, municipalities should be given the necessary power of determining the area. Municipalities and local boards should not be asked to make good the loss incurred by decreasing the number of shops when the power of decreasing is delegated to them. I cannot suggest any other taxes. "

To Mr. Madon :—" In Bassein there are many illicit distillers. Illicit distillation is going on there. They are the Agashis, the Virats and the Kejas. The population of Bassein is 10,000. The Malis can read and write. "

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"In town there is not much of a drinking population, th people are educated, they can read and write. In Bassein three liquor shops have bee n abolished."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I am in favour of total prohibition, reducing 10 per cent. every year. In town there is a mixed population. We have villages round about Bassein. In Bassein drink cannot be controlled; just outside it is more. Drink certainly affects the output of work unfavourably. The majority of the population in town is Mussalmans and Hindoos. There should be gradual reduction so as to have total prohibition at the end of 10 years, "

To Dr. Patil :—" Alcohol is depressing and dangerous. Liquor and wine are poisons and affect the brain cells, etc.

" Toddy is finished by 10 o'clock in the morning.

" I know not whether ashes, cowdung, soap-foam and other things are added in the stale toddy to give it a fresh appearance. Stale toddy is generally drunk by the Warlees and the Kathawatees. In Bassein artificial starters are of no use, as there is a good demand for stale toddy. Certainly I am against foreign liquor and champagne. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Drink does contribute to an increase in crime and has an injurious effect on the output of work. The Municipal Assistant Surgeon says the majority of assault cases occur after a free indulgence in drink. "

## No. 18.

### Replies of Mr. R. G. GORDON, I.C.S., Collector of Kolaba.

1. I am the Collector of the Kolaba District which has an Excise revenue of about Rs. 12 lakhs with 150 shops. I have been in charge of this district for the last two years.

2. As regards the Excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India quoted, I consider it to be a reasonable one and to have been effective. Taking the consumption in this district as an example in the year 1906, *i.e.*, the year after that policy was enunciated, the consumption of country spirit was 1,20,515 gallons of proof spirit whereas in 1920-21 the consumption was 1,22,819 gallons. On the population figures this amounts to an increase of one dram per head or about 10 per cent. But we have to consider the largely increasing income of the drinking classes since that time. As regards the question of intemperance it would first be necessary to define what is meant by this word. If it means drunkenness, then the only figures available would be those of convictions for drunkenness the number of which is so small as to be negligible ; it is therefore impossible to show one way or the other. If we look however to the past records of some 60 years ago when the Settlement Officer could say that very often whole villages of Agris, men and women, could be found drunk in the evening, I should say that the present population is far more temperate than their predecessors.

3. I am not of opinion that this policy should be altered at present. The decrease in the number of shops and of the weakening of liquor seem to me the best methods of attack combined with the spread of education and the preaching of temperance.

4. I am not in favour of prohibition at present as I do not think that the time has arrived for it among those classes who are accustomed to liquor. Those who clamour for prohibition do not represent those classes upon whom they are merely trying to force their own opinions. Prohibition should be taken as the final measure at that time when there is only a small minority against it. I do not consider it practical at present in the first place because in districts like Khandesh it would be utterly impossible to put it into effect, secondly because the public opinion of those chiefly interested has not yet fully been in its favour, and thirdly because it would merely lead to illicit practices and the use of substitutes such as foreign liquor.

5. I am not in favour of total prohibition and as I do not know what is meant by partial prohibition I do not answer this question.

6. I am not quite sure what is meant by this question. If it is meant that it is right to introduce prohibition now with a view to the effect in the next generation I do not agree with the argument. Owing to the prospective increases in illicit practices, it appears to me that it would merely spread a feeling of lawlessness among those accustomed to drink which would have a bad effect on the rising generation.

7. I do not consider that the end to be aimed at is a complete cessation of consumption of liquor—at least not within any reasonable limits. I believe that we should go slowly taking one step after another and seeing how matters work out. To lay down prohibition as an absolute end *ab initio* will not improbably lead to false steps being taken by the Councils in order to show on paper that this is being done. I would therefore try each step before proceeding further. Prohibition may possibly be the end but I would certainly not lay it down as the definite end at present. I should rather trust to education and the policy already laid down by the Government of India and by the preaching of temperance.

8. I should certainly not prohibit the use of toddy, in the first place because when unfermented it is harmless and in the second place because prohibition would be impossible.

9. I answer this question under 10.

10. (*a*) *Rationing of shops.*—I am rather doubtful about the success of this policy which appears to me to fall between two stools. If rationing is to mean anything it must mean a gradual and steady reduction in the amount of liquor allowed to each shop. This may result in farcical situations in that the State will allow a certain amount of drinking to those who can get to a shop first but will attempt to prohibit others. This appears rather an illogical position to take up. Certainly rationing cannot proceed without encouraging illicit practices or the use of substitutes.

(*b*) The prices of liquor may be raised as high as possible by the increase in still-head duty.

(*c*) The number of shops may be reduced at present on the principle of allowing one to every circle of 4 or 5 miles.

(*d*) I do not think that days can be reduced. The present hours of sale are suitable.

(*e*) The strength of liquor may gradually be reduced in accordance with experience.

(*f*) I do not think this question of much importance.

(*g*) I have no opinion on this point.

(*h*) I do not understand what kind of licenses are meant.

(*i*) The age-limit is already prescribed which is sufficient.

(*j*) While I would encourage temperance associations I think they should provide their own funds.

(*k*) I do not think this proposal would work in this district. Liquor is required by labourers working in the damp in rice fields and also by the Koli fishermen who take it on their boats at sea.

11. No.

12. Local option at present would merely mean putting the matter into the hands of the upper classes who have little sympathy with the point of view of the drinking classes. It would also result in sudden decision being taken in the heat of the moment by irresponsible people which would afterwards be regretted. Such resolutions were taken many times last year in villages which have afterwards been recanted. The people of this district are certainly not yet fit to be entrusted with this power.

13. I am not in favour of this suggestion which is open to the objections made above. Both the local boards and the municipalities at present represent only one class of the population, *i. e.*, the higher class. They have no knowledge of excise matters and very few of them have ever studied the question at all. None of the municipalities of this district will after this year contain more than one shop and the boards cannot be allowed to say whether that one shop shall be taken away or not. They would all vote that it should be removed largely because they would not have the strength of mind to do otherwise. The local board is also composed of people who know nothing about excise matters and who take very little interest even in the work which they are now supposed to do but do not do. They again would simply be swept off their feet by any temperance agitator who chose to attack them and are quite incapable of deciding the policy.

13. The Advisory Committees have been found fairly useful though rather as source of opinion than as making definite proposals. I have no changes to advocate in their constitution.

14. Drink certainly does conduce to the increase in one class of crime, *viz.*, quarrels combined with violence especially among the Agris, and the result of the temperance campaign of last year has been a considerable decrease in this class of crime. I do not think however that drink has much influence in connection with other classes of crime, so far as the criminal returns disclose. As regards the question of output of work, so far from drink decreasing the amount of work done I have been informed by more than one individual that the cultivators will not work at the *bandhs* of the rice fields, unless they are provided with liquor. The Koli fishermen also are stated to require liquor as a stimulant through their voyages. I ought to say, however, that several cases have occurred during the past two years of offences among the police owing to drink and their work will certainly be improved in some cases if temptation was taken out of their way.

15. I regret that I am unable to make any suggestions for new taxes.

16. I have no special remarks to offer except that the prices should be made as high as possible.

17. I believe that the custom of giving opium to young children is not very prevalent in this district. I have no opinion on the question of how this practice effects on death-rate.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. GORDON replied to the President :—" I was in Ahmedabad and not at Kaira.

" I have Advisory Committees in every taluka. It is generally the Mamlatdar who presides over these committees.

" In the Kolaba District drinking has decreased. In my opinion the Agris, Marathas, Kunbis, Kolis, Fishermen, Mahars, Kathadis, hill tribes and Thakores are all addicted to drinking in the Kolaba District. In the Karjat Taluka there is raw material from which illicit distillation can be made. There are hundreds of trees in Panwel from which toddy is derived. There was consumption of 56,000 gallons of toddy last year. Toddy is less harmful if drunk fresh. I cannot say whether it contains alcohol after it is kept for a very long time. Education in the whole district is about 3 per cent. Education will certainly help to wean these communities away from this habit of drinking.

" The panchayat system in the Kolaba District is very strong.

" Drinking is very common in villages ; Agris and Fishermen also drink.

" Temperance associations should not be subsidized ; I think money will be wasted by them. There are associations which carry on temperance work for a very short time and then cease their activities. I am in favour of local option. It should be given a careful trial ; it is worth trying.

" Representatives of the taluka local board and two representatives of the municipality and others nominated by the Collector serve on Advisory Committees. According to the

recommendations of the Advisory Committees I have reduced 17 liquor shops. Of course I cannot give effect to all their recommendations; for Advisory Committees are peculiar things. Some recommend total prohibition at once, while others recommend small reductions. The total number of shops before the reduction of the 17 shops was 92.

"I hear for the first time that the opinion of the Advisory Committees is not respected. I give proper weight to their recommendations.

"Sources of income in Mahad are very poor. Education is less.

"I will not invest local boards and municipalities with any powers of reducing or closing liquor shops."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Many thousand talukdars were in my charge; they are not addicted to drink.

"I cannot say what was the condition about drink in 1827 at the time of the Angryas and the Peshwas."

To Dr. Patil :—"Though against total prohibition, we are trying some measures, *viz.*, such as closing of liquor shops. Last year we made a reduction of 18 per cent. in liquor shops. Sixty years ago whole villages of Agris, men and women, could be found drunk in the evening. They were at that time distilling liquor themselves and they were the owners of the land. When they were prohibited from distilling there was no discontent. They are now mostly tenants and indebted to *sowkars*. During the recent strike five thousand acres of land remained uncultivated. The strike cost about five lakhs of rupees. They have given up drinking and are holding out against *sowkars*. The movement is economical and not political."

"To Mr. Jadhav :—"Liquor shops are open from 10-30 a.m. to 9. p.m.

"Advisory Committees are not of much practical use. Kolaba is a very ill-educated district.

"The Agris wanted some relaxation in their rent and that is why they went on strike. There was nothing of politics."

*Statement produced by Mr. Gordon, at the time of his oral Examination.*

**Statistics.**

| Taluka. | Population. | Land Revenue. | Shops. | Expenditure on liquor. | Average per head. | Times land revenue. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| | | | | | Rs. a. | |
| Alibag .. | 79,196 | 2,46,000 | 13 | 2,70,000 | 1 2 | 1·09 |
| Roha .. | 45,888 | 1,19,000 | 7 | 53,275 | 1 3 | ·5 |
| Mahad .. | 1,06,784 | 1,45,000 | 6 | 99,000 | 0 15 | ·7 |
| Mangaon .. | 78,580 | 1,56,000 | 6 | 63,000 | 0 13 | ·4 |
| Pen .. | 68,880 | 1,91,000 | 9 | 1,94,000 | 2 13 | 1·0 |
| Panwel .. | 1,01,330 | 2,75,000 | 20 | 5,47,000 | 5 6 | 2·0 |
| Karjat .. | 82,169 | 1,60,000 | 14 | 1,41,000 | 1 11 | ·9 |

## No. 19.

REPLIES OF MR. MANEKLAL LALLUBHAI, SUPERINTENDENT OF SALT AND EXCISE, THANA.

1. I am Superintendent of Salt and Excise, Thana Sub-Division, comprising the Thana and Bombay Suburban Districts. I have been in charge of this district since October 1916 with short breaks. This district is known for illicit distillation, and the consumption of liquor and toddy is higher here than in any other district, except Bombay and Surat. As regards Excise revenue, Thana stands next to Bombay. Not having served in the subordinate service of the Excise Department I have no prejudices for or against the Department. This being so, I studied the Excise policy with an unbiased mind and have in the course of my duties always encouraged temperance. I am a total abstainer myself.

2. The policy laid down by the Government of India in 1905 is generally a sound one and accordingly the still head duty has been increased from time to time, a number of shops have been closed, the auction system has been introduced to do away with vested interests, the stronger liquor is being gradually eliminated, the limit of possession and sale has been reduced and the Establishment has been largely increased in order to exercise strict control on the licensees. The substitution of weaker for stronger liquor and the simultaneous increase in the price of stronger liquor has led to a decrease in the consumption of liquor in proof gallons. The limit on sale and possession has also a salutary effect in checking consumption. The increase in still head duty and the introduction of the auction system and the consequent abolition of maximum selling prices have led to a sudden rise in the retail price of liquor. It has gone up from 9 annas for a bottle of 60 U.P. to one rupee and even more in certain tracts. In my opinion the rise in the price of liquor must affect the economic condition of the country. In view of the fact that certain classes of men, especially the labouring class and the agriculturists and fishermen who cannot do without liquor and who consider liquor as a necessity, demand higher wages, this is the general opinion of the labour employers. The rise in the price of country liquor leads to increased consumption of foreign liquor, more illicit distillation and more illicit importation of country liquor from Portuguese territory and the Indian States with whom no Abkari agreement has been made, *e.g.*, Dharampur. A further increase in the retail price of liquor is to be deprecated.

The closing of a number of liquor shops leads to intemperance since a man who formerly used to drink a dram or two every evening now drinks a bottle at a time when he goes to a liquor shop once a week. He drinks to excess. In the monsoon when these people cannot easily get to liquor shops they resort to illicit distillation. Mhowra is collected during the free season and stored under-ground in open compounds. Jaggery and even rice are used for illicit distillation. In parts where materials for illicit distillation are not available methylated spirit is used. Closing of shops has therefore done more harm than good to the drinking class.

The auction system has brought more revenue to Government but has led to many malpractices. Adulteration and short sale are becoming common. The auction system without maximum selling prices and with a fixed ration for each shop will lead to malpractices of a grave form. Unscrupulous men will get into the trade, obtain shops at exorbitant prices and will at the same time sell less than the ration. It would pay a licensee to sell illicitly manufactured or illicitly imported liquor at a reduced price than to sell duty paid liquor at a high price. Government would lose large revenue in the shape of still head duty and the temperance agitators will hail with delight the drop in consumption according to recorded statistics; but in reality the system will lead to more drunkenness than at present. I do not think starvation is the best remedy for every disease.

I quite approve of the policy of substituting weaker for stronger liquor and toddy for weaker liquor, but it is not advisable to reduce the limit of sale and possession in rural areas where shops are situated at long distances. I would rather have more shops and then reduce the limit of sale to a pint at a time. Reduction in the number of shops and restrictions on sales must lead to higher prices to consumers and *kevating* (illicit sale).

3. I think the policy laid down by Government must be changed in rural areas in view of the fact that Government does not desire to interfere with the habits of the people. In fact, such an interference is not possible and would lead to serious trouble. The experience during the picketing movement has shown that a man who wants his usual drink will have it under any circumstances and at any price. If he cannot get licit or illicit country liquor, he will have foreign liquor or even methylated spirit. In my opinion we should have in rural areas liquor shops within reasonable distance from every village inhabited purely by drinking classes, say, 3 miles, but the shops should as in old days be situated outside the villages so that they may not be a nuisance to any one. There should be fixed maximum selling prices for 60 U.P. liquor; the stronger liquor should be done away as rapidly as the local conditions would permit. The

limit of sale to each individual at a time should be reduced to a bottle, then to a pint and ultimately drinking should only be allowed in the shop. These objects cannot be achieved as long as the auction system is in force. We should have a respectable farmer for each taluka. Though he may not pay as much revenue as we receive at present by the auction system he will not at any rate encourage consumption. He may be ordered to sell a certain quantity only. He will not, for the sake of his own reputation, sell illicit liquor. He will employ reliable servants. Some of the present licensees were farmers' servants in the past but in those days they were more scrupulous than at present owing to the supervision of the farmers. Government also will not have to employ a large establishment. In urban areas the existing policy of Government to reduce the number of shops and to restrict the limit of sale should be continued; but in this area also there should be maximum selling price which should be less than the price of foreign liquor. Unless Government is in a position to enforce all necessary restrictions on foreign liquor in order to prevent its substitution for country liquor, nothing can be done.

The Government of India desired that liquor offered for sale should be of good quality. I am not a chemist and cannot say whether the quality of liquor at present supplied is good; but the fact is that the consumers do not like it. They preferred the liquor supplied from the Uran distilleries. The reasons assigned by the consumers are that the liquor manufactured at central distilleries was produced and issued at the strength at which it was to be sold. At present liquor is manufactured to the highest strength possible in order to save transport charges and is then watered at warehouses. This water is not distilled water. The watered spirit remains in the warehouse vat for about a week and in shop casks for about a month. If diluted whisky or brandy is not considered fit for drinking after an hour or two, I do not understand how diluted country spirit can be considered fit for consumption after a week. It is impossible to clean large warehouse vats periodically. I have often noticed a thick sediment in shop casks.

What is saved in transport charges is lost in licensee fee, since the licensee when taking up his shops takes into account the wastage in transit from warehouse to shop and the transport charges.

Again there is a craving for toddy spirit in coast talukas and the consumers run to the neighbouring Portuguese territory. No toddy spirit is manufactured in this Presidency since the closing of the Ratnagiri, Kanara and Dadar distilleries.

If one central distillery is only to be allowed there should be a depot in each taluka and the establishment charges should be borne by the licensees or the farmer of the taluka.

4. I should like to see a dry country but from what I know of the habits of the people and the custom among low classes I do not think prohibition is possible for at least a generation. If Government prohibit drinking by law, poor farmers, fishermen, etc., will be unnecessarily harassed by the Police and Excise subordinates. They cannot and will not give up drinking at the will of Government and will either have to submit to prosecutions or will have to keep the Police and Excise pleased. I am entirely against these low subordinates getting such powers. It will be a suicidal policy and not at all advantageous to India. Prohibition should be the goal and it should be attained by other practical measures. In the first place, it is necessary to educate the masses, remove their prejudices, explain to them the evil effects of drink and lastly to induce them to change their social customs, which require liquor to be served out on certain occasions. In the second place, foreign liquor should not be available to these men as well as to the high classes of Indians who drink liquor more as a luxury than as a necessity, though their religion forbids them.

5. The objections mentioned are enough to show that prohibition is impracticable. I would go further and say that prohibition would affect agricultural operations, especially in the rice producing districts, since the cultivators have to work in knee deep of water under pouring rain for days together and require drink at the end of the day's work. If they are forced to give up drinking, they will suffer from rheumatism and die early. It is not good for the country to preach prohibition though it may be kept as our ultimate goal and we should endeavour to prevent the younger generation from acquiring the habits of their parents.

6. Yes, prohibition may have a large influence on the next generation, but what about the intervening period. Are we going to sit quiet and prevent advancement of our industries? I fear our mills and other industries will suffer and lands will not yield as much crop as at present. We know that during the influenza epidemic crops could not be removed in many places and was destroyed. The same will be the case when the present generation is prevented from getting the daily stimulant. Without it they cannot work.

7. Please see answer to question 2. I have made certain suggestions there to reach the goal.

8. I am not in favour of prohibition. If it is to be applied and can be applied, it must be applied to distilled as well as fermented liquor as also to toddy because toddy ferments after a time and can also be distilled into liquor. Toddy in a fresh state is not at all injurious, but there are many who want something intoxicating and they always drink stale toddy, very often four or five days old. I must say that stale toddy is not as bad as liquor.

9 and 10. Foreign liquor should be subjected to all the restrictions as regards possession and sale as are imposed on country liquor.

Possession of methylated spirit beyond a certain quantity should be made an offence and the licensees for the sale of methylated spirits should be allowed to sell a fixed quantity per year only, which should be fixed in accordance with the approximate demand for it for stoves, etc.

No foreign liquor, hotel or refreshment room, or "on" licenses should be allowed in any town, except Bombay and Poona.

Country liquor shops should be located outside villages and at a distance of 2 or 3 miles from one another and no "off" sales should be allowed and no one should be allowed to have more than a pint a day.

Taluka monopoly system should be introduced and a ration per each taluka may be fixed.

The limit of sale and possession of toddy should be reduced from 4 gallons to 1 gallon.

The stronger liquor should be eliminated as soon as possible.

The hours of sale should be curtailed but they should be fixed to suit local conditions.

The Mhowra Act should be applied to all the districts where mhowra grows and is used for illicit distillation. At the same time all mhowra should be collected by State agency through the police patel and sold to the distillery contractor.

Abkari arrangement should be made with all Indian States and the Portuguese frontiers should be strongly guarded.

Temperance associations should be formed in every district which should explain to the drinking classes the evil effects of drink.

The masses should be educated and the teachers in primary schools should prevail upon boys of backward classes to give up drinking.

No club should be allowed to sell foreign liquor without a license and only such clubs which are frequented mostly by Europeans should be granted the license.

In cities and district head-quarters towns the number of shops should be reduced and they should be located outside the towns.

11. I am not in favour of local option unless sincere volunteer workers are available. There are very few men who could be trusted to work whole heartedly for the furtherance of the temperance movement. Hired and paid men are worse than no men.

12. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, if the power of giving out the shops is to remain with the District Collector and the Excise Department. There will be constant trouble and friction. They may only have the authority of closing a shop on condition that the loss of revenue is made up by them. All municipalities and local boards will try to get the shops shifted outside their limits if they have not to pay anything and after all what benefit is derived by transferring the so-called evil from one place to another. It amounts to driving out the ghost from your own house, not caring as to whether it will worry or annoy any other man. The local bodies should close shops and compensate Government or let them remain.

13. My personal experience is that Advisory Committees do not render assistance to the Excise Department but merely find pleasure in putting obstacles. The members are affected by personal or sectional interests and never care to study any question. They object to the suggestions made by Government officials without attempting to solve the difficulty. These committees will be useful if there are sincere workers.

14. I do not think that the evil of drink contributes to an increase in crime.

15. Even if the restrictions are placed on consumption of liquor, there is sure to be a fall in revenue. As I am not in favour of entire and immediate prohibition, provision need not be made for 4 crores. We shall have a deficit of a few lakhs every year and this loss can be made up by imposing an export duty of Rs. 2 per 1,000 lbs of grass and hay. The price of grass had gone up to Rs. 30 per 1,000 lbs and now it is about Rs. 23. The price at the source is only Rs. 8 or 10. The middle men get the profit and a large quantity is brought into Bombay every day. A tax of Rs. 2 per 1,000 lbs. will not affect the poor and can be borne by the grass merchants.

Increased cess on sand.

Contributions from local boards and municipalities.

16 and 17. I have no remarks to make as regards opium, except that the sale of *bala golis* might be stopped. We have heard of many deaths of children from an overdose of opium. *Ganja* and *bhang* are not as injurious as opium.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MANEKLAL LALLUBHOY replied to the President :—" I have five years' experience in the Excise Department.

" I have talked to people visiting shops of the evil effects of drink though I am a Government servant. My efforts in this direction have never been discouraged by higher authorities as it is the avowed policy of Government to reduce consumption of liquor by increasing still head duty and price.

" In Thana people go to liquor shops and drink to their hearts' content in any circumstance. In my opinion the closing of shops has added more to drunkenness. Shop-keepers give according to the condition of their shops. I will rather have the " on " shop system.

" In rural areas no sales take place after sunset. No doubt it will be very difficult to control.

" I do not suggest that a drunkard should be given a license.

" 60° U.P. liquor is weak.

" If there are more rules and restrictions Excise subordinates are likely to harass people.

" By ' prohibition ' I mean to stop drink entirely. Even though liquor will be prohibited there will be illicit distillation. Illicit distillation is going on in the district of Thana. This year 250 cases have been detected. That depends upon the crop of mhowra flowers.

" In my district the Kolis, Agris, Waralis, and their women drink. Preaching against drink is quite good, but picketing leads to trouble.

" *If it is practicable* I am in favour of any attempts, both on the part of Government and the people, which would eventually bring about total prohibition within 10 years.

" There are two classes, the Warlees and the Katkaris, who take stale toddy. They are of opinion that it is less injurious than country liquor. The percentage of alcohol in this kind of toddy depends upon the period for which it is kept. We have no means to detect stale toddy.

" Foreign liquors are favourably treated. There is no restriction on foreign liquor. Licenses are granted to sell foreign liquor in railway refreshment rooms in Bombay and other places. The Bandra refreshment room has no liquor license.

" The right of local option is likely to be abused. It is my personal experience that the Advisory Committees do not render assistance, but that they only put forward obstacles. Advisory Committees are elected. The municipality sends one member, the local board sends one and the rest are nominated by the Collector. Either the mamlatdar or the prant officer presides. They simply make recommendations and do not show any particular site for the location of a particular shop. I have attended few Advisory Committees. They are merely advisory.

" Auction sale is worse than the monopoly system. I would prefer the taluka monopoly system. This auction system is taken from Madras. It is a new system here. It was first introduced in 1903.

" Before that the fixed fee system was current in this Presidency. In Bengal the tender system is prevalent. The Madras system is now followed here. Mr. Arthur resumed this system. The auction system was first introduced in the Khandesh District.

" Sixty years ago shops (Kalal's houses) were located just outside towns. I learn this from enquiries made among villagers. I would altogether forbid the use of liquor in clubs with certain specific exceptions. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" The Administration Report will give the Committee the information they require as to the quantity of liquor in proof gallons and in bulk. In my district the bulk may have increased. It has been increasing since 1918. This is just to meet the general level of prices. I am advising the introduction of weaker liquor. I do not think that distilled water is added to liquor. Ordinary water is used. To save this adulteration, the liquor should be distilled at that strength.

" Under the old system Government could increase vend fees."

To Dr. Patil :—" I do not know whether foreign liquor is mature or otherwise. In most cases rich people use it as a luxury. To the lower classes religion does not forbid the use of liquor. Drink means disease in the case of those who are in the habit of drinking. I adhere to my statement that cultivators believe that as they have to work in knee-deep water during the rain for days together, they require drink at the end of the day's work or else they would suffer from rheumatism. In any case that is my opinion as a layman, whatever science may propound. Whatever the medical experience may be, I respect my own opinion. "

No. 20.

REPLIES OF MR. M. B. VIRKER, B.A., LL.B., PRESIDENT, MAHAD MUNICIPALITY.

1. I am a lawyer by profession and so have had but few opportunities to go deep into the questions of the inner working of the Excise Department ; still interested as I am in the national movement to rid the country of her drink evil, I have got myself in touch with the working of the local Advisory Committee for the last two years. That is only a basis for me to form an opinion on the questions referred to me.

2. (*a*) However high and laudable the Government's desire might be in adumbrating the excise policy as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India of 1905 to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do, the policy has not substantially succeeded in helping the cause of temperance. Government have brought into being advisory committees whose advice Government officers were not bound to follow. The problem has a double outlook—

(*1*) as a source of revenue and

(*2*) the public well-being.

Though the policy as outlined by Government was in no way to subordinate the latter to the former, the officers who administered the policy had both the licensing and the revenue functions centred in them. As an inevitable consequence of it Revenue officers decide the excise questions to secure larger revenue even at the cost of public welfare. "Maximum revenue from minimum consumption" was the favoured formula of the Excise Department and was a guiding principle of it.

(*b*) The policy has failed to put an effective check on intemperance. Revenue is increased and the consumption of liquor instead of being minimised is also increased though not in the same proportion. Some of the shops have been closed here and there, the proportion of shops closed to those that were open being very meagre. But it is invariably the case that care is always taken to see that revenue does not appreciably suffer before any shop is ordered to be closed.

3. There is no doubt that the change in the policy must be made. But in view of my opinions as expressed on question four, I do not think it necessary to go into details. I may say in general that the policy must be radically changed to make the consumption as minimum as possible without any regard to its effect on revenue.

4. Yes, I am in favour of total prohibition but not all of a sudden. I should like to see Government lay down a definite policy for discouraging the consumption of liquors and securing an effective promotion of temperance with a steady approach towards total prohibition.

Total prohibition should be the goal, and the excise policy be so outlined as to secure it in the course of, say, 10 years or so by a steady defined yearly progress without the provincial finances being allowed to feel the loss of revenue by making it amends mainly by retrenchment and, if necessary, by taxation.

Indians by their long tradition of temperance, their social restrictions and their religious scruples are very sober people and so there is great scope in India for the prohibition movement. The western civilisation with its industrialism has brought in its train the deadly evil of drink in India which first spread like anything in large cities and urban areas which are now the centres of factory industries. The evil is now going to the heart of rural areas also. The danger is every moment increasing in volume and compass and shows no signs of abatement. All the measures taken up by Government up to this while proved too weak to have the desired effect. The failure does not show the impracticability of prohibition but only the ineffectiveness of any haphazard policy like the one pursued by Government since 1905. It is high time to take a bold step, and the revenue consideration must be subordinated to the promotion of the moral and physical well-being of the people.

The example of America is full of inspiring and noble lessons to us. The Americans, having no claim to any tradition of temperance or to any religious compunctions against intemperance, have resolved to go dry by a prohibitive legislation, and I do not know why we should not follow suit. It is but natural that Indians, who are enjoying strict abstinence by instinct, tradition and religion, should hope to bring their prohibitive movement to a successful issue.

No doubt, the policy of total prohibition, if adopted all at once, is open to serious objections as mentioned in the next question and then the loss of rupees three to four crores in the provincial budget of thirteen crores, leaves a gap too wide to find a substitute to cover it at this time of financial crisis. To obviate all these difficulties it is advisable to chalk out a policy to reach towards prohibition in ten years or so. This end will be achieved by adopting simultaneously the following steps among others :—

(*a*) Reducing the strength of liquor every year so as to make the change imperceptible.

(*b*) Rationing the shops and slowly cutting down the supply of liquor every year to each shop.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops year by year.

(*d*) First restricting, say, for two or three years, and then prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops.

(*e*) First restricting and then prohibiting the importation and sale of foreign liquors, except for medicinal purposes.

(*f*) Reducing the hours of sale.

(*g*) Gradual devolution of powers on the principle of local option, the advisory committees and municipalities being entrusted with the licensing and the controlling functions.

5. Total prohibition is likely to facilitate illicit means of obtaining liquor, especially in the districts where raw materials required for the manufacture of liquor are available. To check it, preventive establishment must be maintained. There is also a probability of people taking to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs. To minimise all these drawbacks I propose to go to prohibition by slow and progressive stages. It is impossible to force abstinence on those who are steeped deep in vice; but you can bring them to moderation and from moderation to abstinence quite unwittingly by cutting down the provision and strength of the liquor supplied to them bit by bit. In rural area you will find habitual drunkards as such but rarely. In large and industrial cities the labour class has taken to drink. There are no habitually drinking classes in this Presidency but the labour class from cities and towns has as a whole taken to drink; and the contagion is spreading among agricultural labourers too. Amongst all the classes abstinence is a rule and intemperance an exception. So there is no possibility of any serious discontent resulting from prohibitive legislation on the lines suggested above. Government can rely upon the co-operation of the neighbouring Indian States in the cause of abstention; and have to guard strictly, as they do now, the frontiers of the Portuguese territory only.

6. The argument that prohibition, although it might not be effective in the present generation, will have a large influence on the next has much force. I think that prohibition must have a marked effect on the present generation of the drunkards and, if any traces of the evil remain, they are sure to go in the next. Allurement to drink is facilitated by opportunity offered to the young generation. So, if the opportunities be stopped, contagion to the next generation will also be checked.

7. I have no other alternative legislative method to suggest except the one already proposed to secure complete cessation of liquor. But side by side with the legislative method educative bodies like temperance associations should be encouraged and helped to go on with the anti-drunk campaign. In America people who once regarded that prohibition was a needless interference with the socio-religious practice and the individual liberty of the moderate consumer were taught by continuous and ceaseless propaganda that liquor traffic does not pay in the long run but that it entails a serious loss in national efficiency. Thus they came from the educative to the legislative method. In India drink is forbidden both by the Hindu and the Moslem religions and it will do, if the legislative method on the line proposed and the educative go side by side.

8. I think the principle of prohibition must be applied to all liquors, including tadi and shindi.

9. Not necessary in view of my opinions expressed above.

10. Along with the means already suggested the following may be used with benefit:—

(*c*) Increasing the price of liquor to a limited extent.

(*d*) Reducing the days of sale.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops.

The increase of price or reduction of days should be slowly made every year with the intention to help to arrive at prohibition at last.

11. Local option is no doubt an effective method and being based upon self-determination is sure to enlist public opinion of the locality in favour of reform. But in view of the peculiar natural instinct of the Indians the application of the principle, all at once, is likely to result in prohibition of the drink at one stroke. It, however, has the singular advantage of bringing about abstinence with the consent of the people themselves, and thus supports Government by affording full scope for the educative propaganda.

The limited option given to the localities for the location of liquor shops and the establishment of the Advisory Committees are the only concessions uptil now given to the localities under the principle of local option. They have proved too weak to meet the public demand and now the time has come to concede a large measure of local option to the localities and the local bodies.

I should like to urge the following among other means:—

(1) The committees should cease to be advisory only and should be given power to have an effective control over all kinds of intoxicants.

(2) The committees should be made more representative of public opinion by enlarging a non-official predominent elective element on them.

(3) The measure of local option should be extended to the municipalities.

(4) Licensing function should be divorced from the revenue function, the municipalities and the local committees being given licensing power.

(5) Government should outline its excise policy and the local bodies should have an effective say in the administration of it.

12. The municipalities and the local boards may be given powers, not only to determine the number and the location of shops, but also licensing and controlling powers.

I do not think it advisable to throw on those bodies any responsibility for raising the revenue to recoup the losses which may ensue in result of the exercise of their option. I advocate the policy of divorcing the revenue function from the licensing and controlling function, simply because the Revenue authorities should cease to get an allurement of exploiting the opportunity to increase the revenue and so, if the local bodies be looked to for raising revenue in proportion to the losses to be incurred by their action, they are sure to repeat the wrong which Government officials have done in the past. These two functions, if brought together, would not promote temperance. The same policy was pursued up to now and that was the reason why it substantially failed. The mere change of local bodies for Government authorities in the same policy will not save it from its inherent defects.

13. The existing advisory committees are somewhat useful bodies, but they are hardly equal to the public demand. Being advisory only, they cannot have an effective control over the liquor traffic. So that they must be revised and radically changed. They should be more representative of public opinion with a predominent elective non-official element on them.

14. There is not the least doubt about the fact that the drink evil contributes to an increase of crime. In my career as a lawyer I have come across a good many criminal cases caused only by the influence of drink. One can easily mark that some of the holidays either among the Hindus or the Mahomedans, which are noted for abnormal excesses in the consumption of liquor, are very notorious for crime.

It is a false notion that under the influence of drink the output of work is enlarged. Drunkards declare this as an excuse to justify their habit. It may be that under the influence of liquor, one may not feel the over-exertion ; but whether he may feel it or not, it is sure to tell upon his health, and moral and physical degradation is the sure consequence he has to face in the long run. Economically also all possible output of work under the influence of drink is not paying at all.

15. The reduction, and extinction in the end, of the excise revenue is the unavoidable consequence of the recommendations I have made. But Government will have to face the loss of revenue only to the extent of three millions or so every year. My first and main proposal to make up the deficit in revenue is nothing but one for a serious attempt on the part of Government at retrenchment. One must admit that in India administration of every department is very costly, much more than in any other country, and top-heavy so that there is no use to cut down at the bottom. If you really mean to have sufficient savings, you must have a good cut at the top. So Government should explore all the means in its power to make both ends meet by retrenchment. And if that part of the present Government which is not amenable to the popular will does not see its way to co-operate with the responsible part of it to make up the loss by retrenchment, then and then only I have no objection to some discriminative taxation being taken up to cover the loss. I know the people are overburdened and so retrenchment is the only remedy for making up the loss. But the want of harmony between the two parts of the Diarchy is likely to come in the way of retrenchment, and so to save the country from drink we must be prepared to share some extra burden of taxation. Abstinence from drink will have a salutary effect on labour, capital and national efficiency, resulting in a great saving to the public. Besides, the waste of wealth due to drink will give place to a saving of wealth. Thus the people have no reason to grudge a levy of new taxes. A tax on luxuries such as one on amusements and public entertainments and a tax on the rich such as one on inheritance are preferable to those on the necessities of life.

16. The use of opium and hemp drugs must be first restricted and then prohibited just as the liquor traffic, except for medicinal purposes.

17. I am not in a position to pass any remarks on this point as I have no experience in this respect.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. VIRKAR replied to the President :—" There is no Association in Mahad doing temperance work. I have 16 years' standing in Mahad. There are no communities in Mahad which are addicted to drinking. My general impression is that Mahad is a dry taluka ; this is restricted to Mahad and other big towns. There were first two liquor shops in Mahad. The Municipality have got one reduced. I am not on the Advisory Committee. The population

of Mahad is 7,000. The shop that was removed was in the midst of the population. Generally drunkards visit liquor shops from 5 to 7 in the evening. I think Government might have been raising duties with the intention of prohibiting liquor. I do not doubt their intentions. But I do not think that by doing all this there is any effect on the drinking habit of the people. I have suggested new taxes, if all possible attempts for retrenchment would not make up the deficit. The inheritance tax should be on the lines of the death duties in England. By "discriminative taxation" I mean discrimination should be used by Government so as not to make taxes burdensome to the poor. Further retrenchment can be effected by reducing higher places and higher salaries. By high posts I mean Civil Service posts. During the last 16 years my impression is that drink is on the increase. I have got actual figures. (Here the witness handed over to the President the statement printed below.) I think the rationing system should be given effect to. I am in favour of total prohibition but not all at once. I think people will be able to exercise their rights fearlessly and will not succumb to anything. I think at present vote should be given to men. I do not propose any additional establishment to check higher illicit distillation on account of total prohibition. I cannot say whether there will be a considerable increase in the sale of spirits. I have no experience as to the relative harm done by toddy and by country and foreign liquors. I have heard that toddy is less injurious. I think the right to determine the number and location of shops will be exercised by members of municipalities and local boards in a proper manner. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee being an official influences the Committee. Powers given to local bodies are all right. The Advisory Committees are composed of more than five members, two are non-officials nominated by Government and three by local bodies. Members are dominated by Government. I think that there should be a non-official chairman".

To Mr. Madon :—"Habitual drunkards live in municipal areas. As regards rough figures of consumption please refer to my statement handed over to the President. I am sure every one in the town will vote for total prohibition. I cannot say exactly whether the whole cost will be borne by the people if total prohibition be brought into force, but if it comes to that people will not grudge to bear it. The joint family system will be a difficulty in the way of levying an inheritance tax".

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"The Bombay labourer, while returning to his native village, brings this custom of drinking to Mahad. Comparatively speaking the Mahad Taluka is a dry one."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"I do not think that there will be any discontent if total prohibition is enforced by legislative enactment; it is the primary duty of Government to face discontent of any kind for the moral and material good of the people.

"I suggest closing of shops side by side with the rationing system.

"I think that liquor shops should be opened outside the locality and in out-of-the-way places.

"I think that tea may be taxed."

To Dr. Patil :—"There must be restrictions as to the sale of liquor.

"When a man once is addicted to drinking, he cannot keep himself moderate and he goes on drinking excessively.

"I think that the present age limit of 16 should be extended to 21."

*Statement showing sales of country liquor in Mahad Taluka during the years 1913 to 1921.*

| | Name of shop. | Consumption during the years | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1913-14. | | 1914-15. | | 1915-16. | | 1916-17. | | 1917-18. | | 1918-19. | | 1919-20. | | 1920-21 | | |
| | | 25 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 25 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 25 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 25 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 25 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 30 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 30 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 30 U.P. | 60 U.P. | |
| | | Gals. drms. | Gals. drs. | Gals. drs. | Gals. drs. | Gals. drs. | Gals. drs. | Gals. | Gals. | Gals. | Gals. | Gals. | Gals. | Gals. drs. | Gals. drs. | Gals. drs. | Gals. drs. | |
| 1 | Navi Peth .. | 2,611 0 | .. | 3,796 0 | .. | 3,730 0 | 213 0 | 3,623 | 536 | 3,248 | 874 | 3,706 | 856 | 3,449 44 | 1,102 0 | 3,363 0 | 2,037 0 | |
| 2 | Kharkandally .. | 2,513 0 | 4 32 | .. | 2,473 12 | .. | 2,282 0 | .. | 2,245 | .. | 2,410 | .. | 2,261 | .. | 2,562 24 | .. | 2,607 0 | |
| 3 | Poladpur .. | 1,086 0 | .. | 1,105 0 | .. | 1,113 0 | 30 0 | 1,134 | 85 | 1,242 | 121 | 1,181 | 95 | 1,120 0 | 83 24 | 1,424 0 | 89 0 | |
| 4 | Bimvadi .. | 894 0 | .. | 867 24 | .. | 826 36 | 50 24 | 896 | 165 | 949 | 99 | 862 | 37 | 1,062 24 | 44 0 | 1,132 24 | 48 32 | |
| 5 | Dasgaon .. | 881 40 | .. | 961 32 | .. | 836 24 | 32 16 | 1,110 | 81 | 1,191 | 139 | 1,107 | 156 | 1,117 24 | 162 0 | 1,223 0 | 161 24 | |
| 6 | Nate .. | 445 0 | .. | 470 0 | .. | 401 24 | 20 0 | 349 | 39 | 477 | 63 | 305 | 120 | 345 19 | 126 40 | 457 0 | 103 8 | |
| 7 | Varethi .. | 440 0 | .. | 505 24 | .. | 527 24 | 13 0 | 516 | 39 | 497 | 34 | 355 | 37 | 307 24 | 25 24 | 399 0 | 38 0 | |
| 8 | Varanji .. | 392 24 | .. | 399 0 | .. | 424½ 0 | 15 24 | 511 | 46 | 512 | 54 | 577 | 54 | 440½ 0 | 84 0 | 433 0 | 50 0 | |
| 9 | Mazeri .. | 336 0 | .. | 339 0 | .. | 344 0 | .. | 245 | 61 | | | | | | | | | Closed in 1917-18. |

No. 21.

REPLIES OF Mr. B. N. MOTIVALA, MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR, BOMBAY.

1. I am a landed proprietor and a Municipal Councillor. The answers given below are a result of the study of different books and pamphlets on the subject of the liquor problem in various countries of the world.

2. In my opinion the excise policy of Government has become quite antiquated. The most recent medical opinion has pronounced that alcohol, taken in moderate quantities, produces deleterious effects on individuals, confirmed drunkards become so by being moderate drinkers first. If the question of allowing the drinking of spirituous liquors in moderation had only to do with the drinkers themselves, one could have tolerated the evil, but when it is a question of safeguarding the rights of the unborn generation, one is in duty bound to agitate for the adoption of a drastic policy. All the restrictions and regulations devised with a pious wish to check the drink evil have neither restricted nor regulated it; they have proved to be palliative remedies without curbing the great evil at its fundamental source.

3. I favour the adoption of the total prohibition policy immediately; but, if at all, a time limit of 5 or 10 years is considered desirable to carry out the said policy in definite stages, I shall welcome that method, because then every year a definite advance is sure and certain to be made. Restrictions and regulations should then be so framed as to carry out the policy totally within the stipulated period, and it should be carefully seen that the same are being rigidly enforced.

4. I am entirely in favour of a constitutional total prohibition. By this I mean that the legislature should prohibit the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors for use as beverages. My reasons are as follows:—

(*a*) In the words of the late Honourable Mr. G. K. Gokhale "Total prohibition is really in keeping with the sentiment of the Indian people."

(*b*) The evils of drunkenness, according to Gladstone, out-weigh the evils of war, pestilence and famine put together. Further, all social problems group round the question of alcoholism.

(*c*) Jeremy Bentham has said: "The sole object of Government ought to be the greatest happiness of the greatest number of the community." This end is promoted by encouraging every industry and institution calculated to confer benefit, and discouraging, and even sternly repressing, those of a pernicious, immoral, and dangerous character, in a word, by such wise legislation as shall tend to promote the physical health, the social comfort, and the intellectual enjoyments of the people. Hence Government must sternly repress the "pernicious, immoral and dangerous" industry of alcoholic liquors.

(*d*) The object of all laws is the protection of the rights and interests of the individuals that constitute society. A drunkard is a danger to society. At present law does make men sober when it finds them drunk. The effect of this is temporary. The permanent and cheaper protection which the law could afford will be "by locking up the drink instead of locking up the drunkard."

(*e*) It is a psychological fact that the whole drink habit feeds upon temperate drinking. Each drink increases the craving and leads to further drinking, with all its harmful effects of weakening the will and impairing the forces which oppose and control drinking; hence, if the evil has to be really stopped, it should only be done by adopting the total prohibition policy.

(*f*) Much of the drinking habit is hereditary, through predisposition in the individual; and people having this predisposition, when once they succumb to the temptation of the drink evil, become confirmed drunkards.

(*g*) With confirmed drunkards moral persuasion is out of question, because although they may have the desire to improve, still they do not possess the power; hence, as a public policy, complete prohibition of the beverage liquor traffic must be adopted.

(*h*) Alcohol produces irritability, depression, despondency, moroseness and then leads drinkers to have recourse to further drinking for relief. This state accounts for a large number of suicides.

(*i*) Alcohol undermines the nervous system of drinkers and thus it causes various kinds of mental diseases and several forms of insanity. A large part of the backward, the feebleminded, the imbeciles and the lunatics of the world are the result of the drink habit.

(*k*) The investigations of Dr. Laitinen have shown that alcohol in temperate doses is the principal cause of miscarriages, still-births and involuntary abortions. Alcohol is responsible for the condition of women and girls who, though of sound mind, are taken advantage of through the temporary suspension of their higher faculties as the result of drink; thus it serves as the chief instrument in the fall of women. It debases love to the level of lust, removes the restraints of reason and conscience, and causes most of the marital infidelity of the world. In this way alcohol, more than any other thing, creates the commercial demand for immorality.

(*l*) Alcohol nearly doubles the number of infants that die during the first year, and evidences of increased degeneracy, of weakness of mind, of body, and of morals continue to appear in the children which survive.

Medical men say that it takes four generations of individuals, entirely free from the use of alcohol, for any of the offspring to overcome the germ plasm effects of one alcoholized great-great-grand parent, and even this recovery is accomplished at tremendous sacrifice in the total number of offspring in the three intervening generations and a lack of vitality and soundness in those who survived.

Investigations of Dr. Demme at Berne, Switzerland, have shown that up to the age of five, four times as many children died who had drinking parents as of children who had abstaining parents.

(*m*) If we look at the total mortality figures of Bombay City from year to year and enquire about the ages when maximum deaths take place, we shall find them ranging between 15 to 30 years. The reason for these premature deaths is the alcohol poison which lowers the vitality of the whole system and makes it vulnerable to the attacks of various diseases. Drinkers suffer from liver diseases which cause imperfect elimination of poisonous and waste products and from troubles of the heart which gives way when they are attacked by diseases which are not ordinarily dangerous. It is rightly stated that "In a world without liquor the deaths from consumption, pneumonia and other germ diseases would fall to a small proportion of the present fearful figures and in a less degree from all diseases." Alcohol is also directly and indirectly a cause of the great number of deaths from violence through murder, man-slaughter, and accidents in the industries and transport services.

(*n*) Alcohol is the greatest enemy of labour. It is the primary cause of irregularity, inefficiency and accidents in industry. It is largely responsible for the unreasoning attitude adopted by labour against capital in industrial disputes.

(*o*) It is the primary cause of the pauperism of the world. There is a school of thinkers who believe that it is not drinking that causes poverty so much as that poverty causes drinking. Both statements are partially true, but in an enormously large number of cases the misery, the trouble and the difficulty, if properly enquired into, can legitimately be traced to drink.

(*p*) The following remarks of Dr. Adelph Daum of Vienna afford a salient reason for total prohibition :—

"The procedure of self-regeneration and self-development of labour is affected in a most pitiful way by the production and the consumption of alcoholic liquors. Firstly, a great quantity of nutritive products of the soil is spoiled and destroyed by being changed into worthless, nay, injurious, beverages, so that a great economic value is withdrawn which should have supported and strengthened the physical and mental powers of the nation. Secondly, the strength and health of many thousands of men employed in producing alcoholic liquors and selling them are lost to productive and useful work. So by the general use of alcohol we are wasting the products of nature, the strength of working people, and the income which is the result of labour; and we are hurting in a most fatal manner the very soul of economic life, the efforts of men to better their conditions".

(*q*) Alcohol has been scientifically proved, notwithstanding the specious arguments advanced by paid lawyers, speakers and writers, not to be a food or stimulant or a medicine but a protoplasm poison, a habit-forming narcotic and a specific cause of degeneracy in the life and reproduction of individual man and in society, producing moral, economic and political evils.

(*r*) The retail shops found in great numbers in almost all the streets of Bombay City constitute drunkards' factories among the masses. Further, they being the resorts of dirty and diseased person become hot-beds for the culture of disease germs; they thus not only prove ruinous to the drinkers but also to the drink sellers.

(*s*) Total abstinence has now been recognised to be the aim of armies, navies, railroads and other organizations, demanding high efficiency from their men.

(*t*) The evils of alcohol are so many and varied and the literature on the subject is so profuse that it is needless to repeat here all its evil effects. Suffice it for me if I quote the introductory paragraphs of the Memorial Petition in favour of Prohibition, sent to every ruling Sovereign throughout the world by the unanimous resolution of the representatives of about one half of the nations of the world who attended at the second biennial conference of the International Prohibition Confederation, held in connection with the 13th International Congress on Alcoholism at Scheveningen, the Hague, Holland, in September 1911 :—

> "Whereas in the opinion of this conference, the revenue derived by Governments licensing the manufacture of, and traffic in, alcoholic liquors, opium, and other

intoxicants equals but a fraction of the financial waste and loss directly resulting therefrom, and

Whereas in the opinion of eminent jurists, physicians, scientists and other observers, opinions confirmed by official reports and statistics and concurred in by this conference, the consumption of such intoxicants is a direct cause and the most prolific source of lawlessness, crime, vice, pauperism, insanity and suicide, and results in a great loss of life and property; and

Whereas such intoxicants, in addition to inflicting directly and indirectly upon the community an almost incalculable financial loss, constantly results in the degradation and destruction of the individual, the disintegration of the family, the demoralisation of society and the weakening of the state; and

Whereas in far-reaching and continuously disastrous effects no other interest and custom existing among civilised nations is productive of so much human suffering and so retards progress and prosperity; and

Whereas in our opinion the appalling and increasing evils resulting from the habitual use of intoxicants are such as, in the interests of humanity and good government and the safety of the state, imperatively demand Governmental consideration and action; etc."

(*u*) I would also draw pointed attention to the facts which the scientific study of alcoholic drinks has made available in the past 25 or 30 years and collected in a pamphlet called "Handbook of Modern Facts about Alcohol" by Cora Frances Stoddard, Secretary of the Scientific Temperance Federation (Westerville, Ohio, the American Issue Publishing Company, 1914).

I consider total prohibition to be an eminently practical measure. Witness the rise of Grecian greatness through strict prohibition of alochol under the laws of Lycurgus and the rise of Rome during its 400 years of absolute prohibition. Prohibition policy was tried in Madagascar from 1868 to 1888 and the records show that never in its history was the country more prosperous or contented. In many states of the United States of America prohibition has been tried and the results are available to all in printed books and pamphlets on the subject. I strongly advocate this policy. This kind of policy was tried for more than 35 years by the State of Kansas and it succeeded so well that "fully 95 per cent. of the citizens of Kansas consider the prohibitory law one of the greatest blessings ever bestowed upon the state by legislation." See the opinion of the Governor of Kansas published in the pamphlet called "Results of Prohibition" published by the World League against Alcoholism, 30-32 Bliss Building, Washington, D. C.

For carrying out this policy, the first step which I would propose would be the purchase of the whole liquor trade by Government. It would prove to be a sound investment. The results at Carlisle afford the best proof in favour of my argument. The purchase by the State will eliminate private profit and thus remove the fundamental cause which maintains and sustains the drink evil. Public houses conducted under state control with a view not to make profit but to satisfy a reasonable demand will destroy the motive for irregular or illegal practices for encouraging or stimulating the sale of alcoholic drinks. They should, under State control, be converted into places for food, drink and refreshment. Under State control, the breweries should make non-toxic beer containing not more than 2 per cent. of alcohol and distilleries should make only industrial alcohol. In this way we shall be carrying out "constructive prohibition" as advocated by Dr. C. W. Saleeby. If this is strictly done for five years, we will be paving the way for adopting the policy of total prohibition in our Presidency at a later stage.

5 (*a*) and (*b*) can be overcome by keeping a careful watch, irrespective of any cost for the first few years. Ultimately, public opinion having been formed, ordinary measures will suffice. Indian States and Portuguese territory will see the wisdom of the prohibition policy and they will adopt it at an early date; if they do not, then ultimately they will see the way in which that policy has worked for the good of the people in British territory and then they will surely adopt it.

(*c*) Prof. F. W. Newman has said "Virtue must come from within—to this problem religion and morality must direct themselves. But vice may come from without—to hinder this is the care of the statesman." The duty of Government as defined in the Bill of Rights of Great Britain is that "Government is constituted for the protection, safety, prosperity and happiness of the people, and not for the profit or private interests of any one man, family or class of men." The evil effects of the drink traffic are not confined to buyers or sellers of drink, but extend to society too. Hence its prohibition, in the interest of one common humanity, is obligatory on the State. The State has legally prohibited the pernicious national customs of the people such as polygamy, infanticide, sati, etc., and hence the argument that the custom of drinking, if interfered with, will cause serious discontent ought not to be allowed any consideration when "the greatest happiness of the greatest number of the community" is involved.

(*e*) The probability of people taking to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs is not justified by facts. Dr. Joseph C. Doane, Resident Physician in charge of the Philadelphia General

Hospital, says: "I have made a point of asking all drug patients whether lack of alcohol has turned them to drugs, but have yet to find such a case. So far as I can see, there is no close connection between drugs and alcohol. I can say positively that there has been no increase in drug using since prohibition." Mr. Crossen, the Prohibition Enforcement Officer, was a drug officer of the Internal Revenue Department for four years, and he holds a similar opinion, saying "Dope-using is decreasing, not increasing. I know that there has been a general impression to the contrary, but it is not in accord with the facts. The Harrison Anti-Narcotic Law, which has been in operation for some years, has greatly decreased drug consumption, and that decrease is continuing. There is no practical connection between dope-using and alcohol." Mr. William L. Woodward, of Clarke, Woodward Drug Company, Importing and Manufacturing Druggists, Portland, says in a signed statement, "Alcohol drinkers have not become drug addicts. Nothing in our experience would indicate a relation between prohibition and the narcotic habit. The writer is not prepared to admit that the number of drug addicts is increasing. Our experience clearly indicates that those who sought alcoholic stimulants do not turn to drugs."

6. The experience of other countries leads me to believe that prohibition will be mightily effective in the present generation too; but assuming that it does not, it is self-evident that infants and children reared by mothers under a prohibition regime and parents living under the same conditions will undoubtedly result in having a teetotal generation in the near future.

7. I do not consider prohibitive legislation to be the only means to achieve the object of "complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor." The end could be successfully achieved by undertaking the double means of education and legislative prohibition. These two instrumentalities must work and continue to work side by side, education must strike at the demand and legislation must strike at the supply.

I would not prohibit the use of fresh, sweet tadi which is not fermented.

8. Dr. Benjamin Ward Richardson has conclusively proved that the action of alcohol taken in moderation or in excess, whether in the form of fermented or distilled liquor, is essentially that of a poison; hence, the principle of prohibition should be applied to all kinds of liquors, whether distilled or fermented. Prohibition should specially apply to fermented liquors because they produce vastly more degeneracy, quantitatively, than distilled liquors and because their effect is slower but more deadly, more general and insidious.

9. Holding the view that total prohibition is desirable and feasible, I do not see the necessity of suggesting other means for the control and gradual reduction of the consumption of alcoholic liquors; but if it is decided that the goal of absolute prohibition should be achieved within the course of 5 or 10 years, I would suggest, as mentioned before, the adoption of the policy of state purchase of the entire liquor trade and of educating the people about the harmful nature of alcoholic beverages so as effectively to bring about the desired result.

10. All the means from (*a*) to (*k*) are palliative measures and do not attack the drink evil at its source. If the liquor trade is purchased by the State and the public-houses serve as refreshment houses and provide non-toxic beer containing not more than 2 per cent. of alcohol, then several of the means suggested will not be necessary. All the suggested means hold good only when the Government excise policy is allowed to remain as it is at present; put even then the powers mentioned in the different means should be in the hands of advisory committees only. Under State control importation and sale of foreign liquor containing more than 2 per cent. of alcohol should be prohibited and light wines alone containing two per cent. of alcohol should be allowed to be sold in public houses. If at all it is necessary that beer containing higher percentages of alcohol should be allowed to be sold, then the duties on different kinds of beer should be graded according to their toxic effect. The principle of dilution or the reduction of the strength of liquor so as to make it non-toxic should be the chief means which the State should have recourse to when the liquor trade is under their control with a view to bring about a gradual adoption of the total prohibition policy. Further, the hours for the sale of such diluted beer should coincide nearly enough with the eating of the two principal meals of the day so that alcohol when taken with food may further be diluted. I suggest below other means for controlling consumption:—

(1) The drink question, if properly examined, will largely be found to be the outcome of ignorance fostered by deception. It must therefore be counteracted by knowledge. There are several fallacies regarding drink which must be shown to be entirely delusive. Many persons believe that alcohol is useful as a preventive of plague; many believe that mothers are able to nurse their children well if they take to drink. A large number of persons firmly believe that alcohol taking is a good aid to digestion. All these fallacies must be fearlessly exposed through various educational means.

We must also commence from the first rung of the ladder by educating the children. Their instruction should cover the physiological action of alcohol on the organism, its pathological results, the social dangers from alcoholism, and the economic evils consequent upon the wide-spread use of the drug. In this connection, the suggestion of Signor Ferriari,

Italian Cabinet Minister, is worth noting. He urged that besides temperance lessons, experienced physicians should take school-boys to prisons and lunatic asylums to witness "men whose abuse of alcohol has taken away the blessing of sanity and changed them into unnatural fathers, bloody criminals, bestial husbands". Temperance instruction is being given in all the States of America and we should also adopt the same policy but we should see that instruction is being given through skilled teachers who have been taught the principles of hygiene and temperance and who can impart their knowledge simply and graphically. If this is done, public opinion will be created even within the course of one generation which will carry with it all needed legislative reform in the matter of liquor control. While we do so, we should by no means neglect the education of the adult population. It is only when education will spread all round that we can expect the formation of an enlightened public opinion which will be a bulwark of strength when the total prohibition policy has rigidly to be enforced.

(2) The demoralising conditions of the housing of the poor and the urban over-crowding are largely responsible for the drinking habits of the poor. All dusty, dirty and disagreeable occupations have their own share in this evil traffic because they are carried on in hot places and predispose them to drink. Drink, poverty, slums; slums, poverty, drink—such is the vicious circle which we have to overcome. Hence the slums of the city should be abolished at an early date and instead of them we should provide good homes, larger homes, clearer homes and sweeter homes. We must create suburban estates and colonies of bright, large and clean homes, and convey the labourers to them by cheap and rapid traction. We must make their work more pleasant and less monotonous and repellant than it is at present. We should give them regular work and living wages. Instead of having public-houses round about mills, factories, and workshops, let us have tea and coffee shops and milk-depôts. Let us improve the sanitation, appearance and environment of mills, factories and workshops. Witness what Swiss manufacturing firms do for their employees. The Winterthur firm of Sulzer Brothers provided in one year 712,685 bottles of tea and, in addition, 16,479 liters of milk. A shoe-manufacturing firm, Bally of Schonenuerd, began to sell milk to its employees in 1900. The demand was only 12 liters a day. But nine years later the daily sales had risen to 500 liters (among 1,482 workers). The Schaffhausen Steel Works sell 300 liters of milk daily, 600 bottles of tea and 500 of lemonade. Many industrials forbid the use of intoxicants during working hours and at mid-day milk. Let these examples be followed by mill-owners and the owners of large workshops and factories, employers of large labour like the Port Trust, the Bombay Municipality and large manufacturing firms and we shall soon witness a great change for the better. Large employers of labour must humanise industry and, if they do so, they will see for themselves that labour will not seek degradation in drink or low company in public-houses.

(3) The Great Committee on the American Pharmacopœa in 1915 dropped liquors of all kinds from the list of legitimate medicines. Further, the American Medical Association passed a resolution on June 6, 1917, authoritatively forbidding the use of alcohol as medicine. Besides this, investigations of many scientific men have proved that alcohol, instead of being beneficial and curative in its effects as medicine, is a dangerous impediment to curative processes, and causes a predisposition to contract disease. Yet, if medical opinion in India differs on this subject, then chemists and druggists may be supplied with limited quantities of alcoholic drinks to be compounded with other drugs in dispensing prescriptions of duly qualified practitioners.

(4) Patent medicines and medicated wines cause a habit of drinking, hence their sale should be prohibited altogether in case they contain more than half per cent. of alcohol; and the duty on those containing more than that percentage should be increased to 50 per cent.

(5) Knowing well that people take to alcohol to relieve themselves of anxiety, fatigue and grief and not with a view to be poisoned, if Government really desire to promote temperance, it could only be done by their providing counter-attractions in scrupulously clean places, well-lighted, well-ventilated, well-equipped, where people could have good food, pharmacological stimulants like tea and coffee, light beer, good company, recreation, diversion and delight such as music provides. It is only then that we should be providing to the drinkers real physical and psychical stimulants which alcohol stimulates.

(6) Refreshment rooms at all railway stations should be opened for the sale of tea, coffee, milk and other non-toxic drinks.

(7) Law forbids the sale of intoxicating liquors to minors, yet the law is evaded both by the sellers and the minors. Mr. W. E. Johnson is a witness to this state of things in some Indian cities. This must be true because most of the confirmed drunkards form the alcohol habit before reaching their majority. Hence, if at all intoxicating liquors are allowed to be sold, the law about their sale to the minors must be strictly enforced and culprits disobeying the same severely punished.

(8) All kinds of intoxicating liquors, if at all allowed to be sold, should not be allowed to be sold to women.

(9) Drunkards should not be sent to prison but to inebriate homes ; or it would be better in their case that the " Pollard Plan " should be tried by which the drunkard is liberated on condition of signing the total abstinence pledge for a stated period, and during such period committing no further offences.

(10) Municipalities and district and taluka local boards should be empowered to undertake temperance propaganda work. Besides this, temperance associations and other voluntary bodies should be financially helped in an adequate manner to do propagandist work by arranging travelling temperance exhibitions and by other means and they should be pursuaded to make a profitable use of both the English and vernacular press in the cause of temperance with the assistance of medical men, professors, social reformers and social workers.

11. No, I am not in favour of the principle of local option if Government decide to pursue the present policy of applying only palliative remedies. No doubt the nation must be given powers of full self-determination in its regulation of the drink-traffic ; but when the verdict of science is against alcohol, is it not foolish that traffic in this highly injurious substance should go on in one portion of the City and not in another ? If alcohol is injurious in its effects, it is bad everywhere and it should be stopped everywhere. All parts of a city are interdependent : and this non-national method of dealing with this national evil is likely to lend us in several difficulties such as difficulties of evading restrictions and of containing opportunities for indulgence. If the State purchases the whole liquor trade and adopts the principle of selling light wines containing only 2 per cent. of alcohol then only the principle of local option should be allowed.

12. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. I have already advocated the policy of Government purchasing the entire liquor trade and controlling the same for a definite period. I am of opinion that if this is done then the Government must leave the decision about the location of public-houses to be determined by the residents of different wards by means of local option.

13. The present Advisory Committees, to my mind, have not proved fruitful of substantial beneficial results. The members of such committees should be elected by different wards in the same way as municipal councillors are elected at present. They should be the representatives of those wards only where they reside and should advocate only those views which are held by their constituents. This could only be done if the members of the committees know the dates of the committee meetings a month beforehand together with the information about the work to be transacted there with a view to enable them to ascertain the opinion of their constituents. The number of members elected by each ward should be the same as determined for the different wards for the election of municipal councillors. The meetings should be held every year. They should be open to the public and unless there be special reasons, the decisions arrived at by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the meetings should be given effect to.

14. The evil of drink undoubtedly contributes to an increase in crime. Alcohol being a narcotic causes irritability and weakens the judgment and self-control while passions are excited ; hence a number of crimes occur under its influence. The Committee of Fifty in the United States distinctly mentions that " Our statistics point to the conclusion that intemperance is the one most prolific source of the criminal condition ". It is truly said, " Instigators to crime could not exist without liquor, their principal instrument".

Viewing this question from another standpoint, namely, whether the policy of total prohibition in the United States of America has brought about any reduction in crime, we will find that it has had that effect, thus indirectly proving that the evil of drink certainly contributes to an increase in crime. Bearing in mind the facts that national prohibition went into effect in the United States of America on July 1, 1919, and constitutional prohibition became effective on January 16, 1920, the following returns from 54 cities which went dry of their own accord tell their own tale. In 1917, 1918, 1919 and 1920 the arrests for drunkenness in the cities were 372, 497, 294, 008, 205, 391 and 141, 071 respectively and during those years the arrests for all causes were, respectively, as follows, 1,109,561, 1,049,963, 956,215, 935,318.

Alcohol affects the output of work. It impairs muscular work. The judgment of the person taking alcohol being blurred, he imagines that he has accomplished more work than he really has done, while the alcohol temporarily covers his feeling the fatigue. This is soon followed by greater depression.

15. The late Honourable Mr. G. K. Gokhale had said in 1908 that there were other ways of raising revenue much less harmful than that of excise. It is difficult for a non-commercial person to answer the question—which are the other less harmful ways ?

The net revenue from Excise is taken to be 3 to 4 crores. This revenue, though large, pales into insignificance when people come to know what greater charges and burdens they have to bear as the result of drink. If we take into consideration the cost of the crime,

pauperism and insanity and the extent to which alcohol impairs thrift and productiveness, we can then plainly see that alcohol ostensibly gives a large revenue but really costs much more to the nation.

If the absolute prohibition policy is declared to be the goal of the Government Excise policy, then the gradual attainment of that end within a definite period of five or ten years would not prove to be financially embarassing. The experience of Russia proves that the prohibition policy would more than repay the seeming loss of revenue. Dr. E. J. Dillon wrote in the *Contemporary Review*, March 1916, as follows :—

" The Minister of Finance in Russia, M. Bark, who had violently opposed the institution of nation wide prohibition in the Russian Empire, reported after prohibition had been in effect for the first year that, while the State had lost hundreds of millions of dollars of liquor revenue, the treasury was not embarassed, but, on the contrary, its gigantic war difficulties were overcome by the increase of productiveness and the enhancement of profits and of taxable values generally." So long ago as the year 1874, Sir Stafford Northcote, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, referring to a reduction of revenue due to increased habits of temperance, said "I venture to say that the amount of wealth such a change would bring to the nation would utterly throw into the shade the amount of revenue that is now derived from the spirit duty". Sir Stafford Northcote was a wise prophet, his view has been more than justified by our experience in the United States of America. Even if, for some time, Government sustain loss, in full light of the truth that alcohol causes much havoc in the national life of Indians, no sacrifice is too great for Government to make them quite free from this great scourge. We are all " trustees of humanity's futhre ". Let us honestly ask the following questions :—

> " Will the policy in question, viewed from the standpoint of the whole community and over a number of years, enrich human life or impoverish and waste it ? Will it help us and those who come after us to build up a better world, a world of justice, comradeship and high achievement ? Or will it mortgage the nation's future to serve the private ends of a group or a party to-day. "

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MOTIVALA replied to the President :—" I cannot tell you definitely the number of shops in the City of Bombay. There are too many. According to the Excise Department there is some decrease but those which are left are still too many.

" Ten years should be the maximum reasonable limit in which total prohibition should be effected. Serious attempt at least must be made to do away with the drink evil within five years.

" I do not claim any knowledge of the mofussil conditions.

" In the Social Service League there are 1,000 members. Our activities are restricted to lecturing, magic lanterns, etc. Of course we have got Tata Workmen's Institution. It is of recent origin. We have not got therefore any data from which we can say about the League's activities in the cause of temperance as to whether they are successful so far as labourers are concerned. "

To Mr. Madon :—" Total prohibition must be rigidly enforced within five years. "

To the Reverend Mr. Macnicol :—" If the things are allowed to go in their own happy-go lucky way, then I am not in favour of any other methods to effect total prohibition. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I think people will readily co-operate with Government if the policy of total prohibition is adopted.

" I was Honorary Magistrate for 13 years. My personal magisterial experience goes to show that drink creates disorderliness among people and so drink and crime go hand in hand. "

To Dr. Patil :—" I will recommend liquor-shops to be kept open from 9 to 11 a.m. and 7 to 9 p.m., this being the time for dinner and hence the alcoholic effect is sure to be modified.

" So far as mill areas are concerned there ought not to be shops there at all. Shops should not be kept open on pay days.

" Both country and foreign liquors should be treated alike.

" The present age limit of 16 should be extended to 21. "

No. 22.

REPLIES OF MAJOR BHATHENA, I.M.S., SUPERINTENDENT, N. M. LUNATIC ASYLUM, NAWPADA, THANA.

1. I am permanent Commissioned Officer of the Indian Medical Service.

Quite apart from the daily opportunities which present themselves to any person who is desirous of studying this important subject, I have an additional advantage of coming into direct touch with the most pathetic victims of alcohol who are admitted insane into the lunatic asylum of which I hold the charge. For nearly three years I have also been a Superintendent of a Central Prison of this Presidency wherein I came in close contact with prisoners whose crimes were directly attributable to the habit of drinking in excess.

2. The Excise policy of Government as printed in the leaflet which is circulated by the Excise Committee is excellent in theory and there is no reason why it should not work admirably in practice, provided the subordinates of the Excise Department are actuated with the same lofty ideals as their superiors who framed the policy.

3. If in accordance with the declared policy of the Government of India the "considerations of revenues must be absolutely subordinated" to mitigate the evil of drink, I would suggest that the importation of foreign liquor should be prohibited altogether.

The Indian public will thus be unmistakably convinced of the earnest desire of Government to really suppress the evil of drink and the anti-drink campaign in India will then be a crusade against country liquor only.

If an embargo is declared soon on foreign liquor, this country is at present in such a mood that it will give the social reformers a tremendous impetus to bring the country liquor trade to almost extinction. Illicit distillation would also be rendered exceedingly difficult when Government begin to receive the whole-hearted and genuine support of the public.

4. I do not think total prohibition is feasible. In the event of the embargo on foreign liquor receiving the sanction of the Indian legislature, the stock in hand will probably meet the needs of the Europeans and other moderate drinkers for a fairly long time, at any rate until the people adapt their habits to changed conditions.

5. (*a*) is answered, *vide* last sentence in my reply to question 3.

(*b*) If the rulers of India would elect to free their subjects from this universal vice, it is hoped the ruling chiefs of the Indian States would not lag behind to follow their glorious example. No reforms can be introduced into any country if it chooses to wait for its neighbours to make simultaneous improvements.

(*c*) Our powerful Government need have no apprehension on this score. Habitual drinkers whose daily alcoholic bouts are curtailed may grumble and growl, but when they see that the benign Government means well, there would be no room for serious discontent.

(*d*) If the major portion of the nation is determined to eradicate the evil of drink it is not likely that the non-drinkers would wink at illicit distillation anywhere, and especially if some small monetary rewards are offered to successful informants, there would be an effective check over such culprits.

(*e*) This is a bogey not worth considering. One may just as well say that people who stop smoking tobacco take to *ganja*-smoking.

6. It is not prudent to indulge in prophecy of this kind, but there is no harm in making a move in the right direction at any time.

7. No reforms of any kind can be brought about by legislation alone without an earnest and loyal support of the public itself.

The vice of excessive drinking can be gradually eradicated by—

(*a*) starting an energetic anti-drink campaign amongst habitual drinkers;

(*b*) giving an unstinted support to the temperance associations;

(*c*) instructing all children in Government and grant-in-aid schools in elementary hygiene and public health.

8. To start with, I would apply the principle of prohibition to distilled liquors only, country and English alike.

It is a popular belief of those Indians who use alcohol in moderation that fresh unadulterated toddy is the least objectionable of all drinks.

I endorse this view with my own personal experience. It is generally accepted by all scientists that alcohol in moderation is a food, *i.e.*, that it is oxidised in the body into carbon dioxide and water with the production of heat and energy. The amount of alcohol that can be utilised as food is an important matter to determine. From the experiments of Anstie, Parkes and others it appears that the limit of useful effect is produced by some quantity between 1 and 1½ fluid ounces of absolute alcohol in 24 hours.

The amount, no doubt, varies in different persons and under different circumstances, but it may be taken to be the case, as a rule, that any quantity over this will cause alcohol to re-appear in the excretion and produce effects more or less deleterious.

Consisting principally of water, toddy is a beverage which when it is fresh and in good condition is refreshing and exhilarating. When taken in moderate quantity it is a stomachic and digestive adjunct to meals. The question, "what is excess ?" is not easy to answer, and will depend on the habits of those who take it ; but judging from the very small amount of alcohol which is available in fresh toddy, from one to two pints is a sufficient amount for a healthy man.

9. In my opinion liquor-shops are chiefly patronised by mill-hands and labourers solely because they serve the purpose of workmen's club, as they have no other suitable place of amusement to spend their evenings.

Voluntary associations, *e.g.*, temperance societies, social service league, etc., should open, for the benefit of the working classes, clubs and refreshment rooms with a cheap and liberal provision of non-alcoholic drinks and various amusements such as Indian music, gramophones, cards, games, library, etc.

The popularity of such clubs can be enhanced by starting night classes for advancing the general education of those who are anxious to avail themselves of such an opportunity.

The working expenses of such clubs and refreshment rooms can be raised by—

(*a*) a nominal entrance fee and monthly subscription from each member,

(*b*) a contribution from every factory, mill or industry, employing more than 100 men.

Whether it would be necessary to insert into the Factory Act some bye-laws making it obligatory on every mill, factory or industry to maintain workmen's institutions for their own men is a question to be considered.

(*c*) Grants-in-aid from temperance associations which, in turn, should receive liberal subsidies from Government.

10. The various means of controlling consumption, enumerated in paragraph 10, should be applied equally to foreign and country liquor alike.

Rationing of shops can be improved by adopting the "coupon-system" which was prevalent in Europe during the great war when all food stuffs, such as bread, butter, meat, etc., were rationed.

Every person who is in the habit of drinking daily should be given an annual license like the one issued for keeping a gun.

The Excise Department should issue books containing 10, 20 or 100 coupons, each coupon authorising the sale of, say, one ounce of liquor, or one pint of beer, or a bottle of toddy. The maximum number of coupons to be issued to a single individual within a year not to exceed 365.

All sorts of alcoholic beverages to be grouped under five main headings such as :—

| | |
|---|---|
| spirits | ( blue coupons) |
| wines | ( red ,, ) |
| beer | (yellow ,, ) |
| country liquors | ( green ,, ) |
| toddy | ( white ,, ) |

A mixed drinker may obtain several coupons of each variety, but the aggregate total not to exceed 365 a year. The number of coupons issued to each male consumer must be recorded in his license just as the number of cartridges purchased by a gun-holder is accounted for in the gun-license.

No coupons to be issued to women and children under 16 years of age.

The coupon to be made non-transferable ; penalty for the infringement of this rule cancellation of the license.

Wholesale dealers must be forbidden to sell in bulk more than the annual quantity authorised in the license of his customer. In the retail shops no persons to be served with a drink who fails to present his coupon, the shop-keeper doing so to forfeit his license. The advantages of the "coupon system" would be incalculable.

(*a*) By this coupon system not only the liquor-shops are licensed, but their customers are licensed too, thus raising an additional source of revenue from the sale of intoxicating beverages.

(*b*) The same system can be readily made applicable to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs.

(*c*) There will be a perfect control over the sale of all the intoxicants, which can be readily checked by the number of Excise coupons collected by each shop-keeper from his customers.

(*d*) The system advocated is in perfect agreement with the Excise policy of the Government of India.

11. I would not favour the principle of local option until the mass of people are so educated as to appreciate fully the significance of local franchise.

12. Large municipalities which in the opinion of Government have acquired sufficient administrative experience in local self-government may be safely invested with the power of determining the number and location of liquor-shops in their respective areas.

It is not advisable to make them responsible for making up the deficit in the Excise revenue. That would hardly be in consonance with the Excise policy of Government wherein it is expressly stated that " the considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated. "

The municipalities selected to carry out this important social reform ought not to be saddled with this extra responsibility. Some unscrupulous municipalities may increase the number of liquor-shops instead of diminishing them in order to cover itself against any loss.

14. There are crimes which come within the purview of law courts and crimes which don't. Taking into both these categories the evil of drink tends to contribute to an increase.

Has it any effect on the output of work ? Well, America has elected to remain dry in order to increase its output of work.

Very great exertion can be better borne without alcohol than with it, and arduous campaigns can be carried on with the preservation of a high standard of health of the troops, and for prolonged periods, without the use of any alcohol as an article of diet.

There are certain circumstances in which it is very agreeable, as *after* special exertion, or in the evening ; but it cannot be said to be at all necessary.

15. The partial or total extinction of the Excise revenue would be amply compensated, if the demon of drink is driven out of the country. If this goal is ever reached, it would not be unreasonable to expect —

(*a*) an appreciable reduction in crime and consequently fewer police cases and law suits and decreasing number of criminals in jails, and

(*b*) a substantial fall in the number of the sick in hospitals, dispensaries and asylums.

When our police lock-ups, courts, jails and hospitals begin receiving fewer and fewer inebriates, the difficulties of financing the Police, Judicial, Jail and Medical Departments will be correspondingly less and less.

However, I don't anticipate any serious deficit in the Excise revenue if the coupon system is introduced for every consumer of alcohol and a very nominal fee, say, of one pice is levied for every coupon issued by the Excise Department, and a charge of one rupee for an annual license.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Major BHATHENA replied to the President:—" I have 15 years service. I have served in Bombay and Hyderabad (Sind). I think in the present policy of the Excise Department the consideration of revenue is paramount; suggestions are passed upon this consideration chiefly. The minds of officers are pervaded with that point. I have never advocated that total prohibition should be adopted forthwith. I do not advocate total prohibition at all *in toto*. My idea is to instruct people and make them understand that excessive drinking is harmful. There is no harm in drinking in moderation. It has been worked out by scientists that one or one and a half ounce of liquor per day is harmless ; a full peg comes to an ounce and a half, a chota peg measures an ounce. I see no objection if an individual will take an ounce of alcohol per diem.

" I desire that there should be a coupon system. People should be given their daily allowance. If it is worked on this basis the members of any community will be kept in moderation. I think this is a good workable plan. Care should also be taken that others do not take advantage of the coupons issued. It is my general impression that the coupon system was prevalent in England during the war. I am not aware of any other country where this coupon system is adopted.

" Drink in moderation will not affect the output and will not make any appreciable difference. In ten years the Nawpada Asylum received 120 lunatics as a result of excessive drink. [A statement submitted by the witness furnishing detailed information in connection with these admissions is printed below.]

" I was in Hyderabad (Sind) for three years. I cannot say whether the Hindus are more addicted to drinking. I am not competent to give any opinion on this point as I was there all the while in charge of the prisons. I have no statistics of the Hyderabad prison as to the number of criminals there as a result of excessive drink. "

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—" The Superintendent, Yeravda Prison, will give you information as to the number of criminals in prisons convicted of crimes committed under the influence of drink."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I am not in favour of total prohibition. Alcohol, over and above one ounce, is positively injurious. I would like to introduce the coupon system for the reasons stated in my written evidence. "

To Dr. Patil :—" I do not believe in ' craving '. Alcohol is a food as well as poison : it is a food if taken in a certain quantity, say, half an ounce to an ounce per day, but if taken in excess it is a poison. In whisky there is 55 per cent. alcohol. A *chota* peg of whisky contains half an ounce of alcohol. The same amount is contained in brandy. Alcohol is a stimulant to protoplasm and later depressant. Our knowledge of micro-chemistry is too scanty to justify any definite conclusions being drawn from laboratory experiments made on protoplasm. If taken in moderation, sustaining power is not reduced by alcohol. I do not say that everybody should drink. It is agreeable after hard work. If alcohol is required at all; it should be taken in moderation. As to the question whether a man can keep himself within the limits of moderation, I may observe that what quantity may suit one will not suit another. I say, alcohol is not necessary for human life.

*Statement furnished by Major Bhathena showing the number of patients admitted during the last decade to the N. M. Lunatic Asylum, Nawpada, Thana.*

| Year. | No. of new patients admitted. | No. of admissions for Alcoholic Insanity. | No. of admissions for Cannabis Indica. | Average cost per lunatic per year. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Rs. a. p. |
| 1912 .. .. .. .. | 149 | 11 | 14 | 216 1 2 |
| 1913 .. .. .. .. | 96 | 9 | 12 | 228 11 7 |
| 1914 .. .. .. .. | 61 | 4 | 3 | 232 5 3 |
| 1915 .. .. .. .. | 129 | 10 | 19 | 218 15 1 |
| 1916 .. .. .. .. | 258 | 34 | 20 | 194 12 1 |
| 1917 .. .. .. .. | 157 | 12 | 22 | 223 10 3 |
| 1918 .. .. .. .. | 151 | 4 | 20 | 224 11 1 |
| 1919 .. .. .. .. | 136 | 12 | 21 | 283 1 6 |
| 1920 .. .. .. .. | 144 | 4 | 22 | 358 8 10 |
| 1921 .. .. .. .. | 160 | 15 | 11 | 373 5 0 |

No. 23.

REPLIES OF DR. MOTIRAM BALKRISHNA VELKAR OF BOMBAY.

1. I am a graduate in medicine of the Bombay University and a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation. As a physician and as a corporator, and, moreover, as one connected with the labour movement in this country, being member of the All-India Standing Committee of the All-India Trades Union Congress, I had ample opportunities of coming in close contact with the life of the people and of forming my opinion on the drink problem.

2. In my opinion the Excise policy of Government, as has been adumbrated in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001-Excise of the 7th September 1905, is based on a wrong principle since it was applied to a country which was dry till the very advent of the British rule and when the environments in the land strongly militated against the application of that policy. It was based on a very false supposition that the drink habit was ingrained in the people and that, to curb it, slow and steady pressure was required and no drastic legislature for its total eradication. History shows that it is a Western vice implanted into the country, following in the wake of the British rule. Even as late as the year 1818, towards the end of the Maratha rule in the country, the whole Excise revenue of Maharashtra, under the rules of the Peshwas, amounted to Rs. 10,000. This was the revenue of the 10 districts and included even the tax received from palm trees. These facts have been called from the report made by Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone at the time of the transference of the power from the Peshwas into the hands of the British. In his report, which was made in the year 1820, Mr. Elphinstone goes to the length of pointing out that, apart from the saving effected by them, the people maintained a very high morality and enjoyed the best amenities of life. It is curious to note that after full hundred years, with all our boasts of advance in civilization and culture, the excise revenue, which was only Rs. 10,000 so far as Maharashtra was concerned, has increased by surprising bounds, with a corresponding increase in poverty, destitution and crime. It is thus clear that the Excise policy of Government is based on immoral foundations. Government show an undue and solicitous care for persons who need the drink, believing that any interference on their part in trying to check this drink habit within him is an undue meddling with his habits and customs and an encroachment on his personal freedom as an individual. This may sound well with the Government which had religiously stood aloof from interference in the social habits of the governed. The stopping of *sati*, among other things, is a great proof to show that if Government do really intend to do away with an evil, they can do so with an iron hand even in the face of a very strong protest from a large section of the people. Therefore, the bogey of interfering with the habits and customs of the people may be safely brushed aside. To say that the drink habit can be kept within bounds by measures suggested in the policy is not the desire to see the things in their clear perspective; because it is a common experience that a person once on the border-land of the vice takes not much time to travel far deep into its clutches, with the least expectation of ever coming out of it. Then again the method of making the tax on the liquor as high as possible for the furtherance of the Excise policy will not be, in my opinion, effective. Mere increase in the price of the liquor is not a strong checkmate for one addicted to the vice and his already slender purse is all the more depleted, because of the high cost he has to pay for the liquor which he must have at any cost, to the utter ruination of his family which could at least keep body and soul together, though miserably, when the price of the liquor was not so high. Thus it would be clear that the Excise policy of Government has totally failed to put an effective check in intemperance.

3. Far from improving upon the policy of Government, I would completely do away with it and would replace it with one of total prohibition within a definite stated period.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition for the reasons already mentioned in answer to question no. 2 inasmuch as the policy of Government has not effected any check on the intemperate habits of the people. I do consider total prohibition as a practical measure. But Government must not move with a distrust of the people but both Government and the people must co-operate with each other in the matter with sympathy on both the sides. If total prohibition as a practical measure is a fact in America, why should it not be in India if both the Government and the people co-operate with one another? Let us for a few moments turn our eyes to the United States. What is the position there to-day with regard to the drink question? From the western to the eastern sea board of that country it is illegal to supply one glass of intoxicating liquor to any one of its two hundred million inhabitants. People will say "it will never last, that law will soon be repealed!" When they say it, they overlook the fact that prohibition in America is not a new thing. For the past twenty years some of the states have been "dry", and before the present law was universally adopted more than half the United States were under prohibition and not one of those States that adopted prohibition has ever repealed the law. Thus it will be clear that total prohibition can be a practical measure if we mean it. To carry it out I would briefly suggest what both Government and the people ought to do. In order to assure the people of the *bona fide* of Government, the latter ought at once to proclaim the stated definite period within which the total prohibition campaign will be complete and also mention side by side the steps they intend to take in the furtherance of that campaign.

I believe that the steps mentioned in question no. 10 to control consumption will be a move in the right direction. Picketing of the liquor shops should not be looked upon by the Government as something dangerous to the safety and well-being of society as *bonâ fide* pickets have no personal ends to serve by picketing. Merely giving lectures on temperance and depicting to the people the evils of drink by means of magic lantern slides, pamphlets and house-to-house visitations are not an effective method to wean the people from the vice of drink, but to stand by the liquor shop—to use the technical word—" to picket " and to persuade the people from entering these dens of vices is a sure and effective method of weaning them away from this vice, since the psychology of the Indian is such that he knows that a visit to a grog shop is a gross sin committed against his religion and will also bring on social disfavour and is thus very much more amenable to persuasion. Mere lectures on the evils of drink will not do. Because the meeting places of drunkards are not the temperance lecture halls but the grog shops. It is the grog shops which the drunkards resort to every day and if you want to address them you must stand by the liquor shops, *i. e.*, " picket " and address them while they are entering these dens and your appeals will not be ineffective. Thus the educative propaganda by means of lectures, distribution of literature on temperance, magic lantern slides and house-to-house visitations, coupled with picketing along with co-operation from Government by their throwing off distrust of the people and by movement in the direction of total prohibition in a stated definite period, will bring such prohibition within the limits of practical politics.

5. (*a*) Increase the staff of preventive officers to bring illicit traffic under check.

(*b*) Public opinion is contagious and will spread to Indian States and Portuguese territory because of the very fact of their close proximity and the newly awakened public opinion in the Indian States and the Portuguese territory will enforce prohibition there naturally.

(*c*) It is a mere bogey. Vice is a vice and it is the duty of Government to put it down with an iron hand, notwithstanding the serious discontent supposed to be caused by such measures, as it does move in the case of crimes.

(*d*) To prevent the levy of illegal exactions on the part of the preventive establishment you must recruit men from respectable families and pay them handsomely with attractive prospects in service and the men will not succumb to temptations.

(*e*) Evils of other intoxicants are as clear and a person weaned away from the vice of drink will not fall a prey to any other intoxicant unless he is by nature callous.

6. Though it may be a little difficult to win over a person already addicted to the vice, prohibition will be effective in the case of the younger generation because the younger generation has not as yet tasted the " fatal drop ".

7. I consider the prohibitive legislature as the only means for the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor. Educative and moral propaganda should be carried side by side but they should be the handmaid of prohibitive legislature.

8. Yes. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors, whether distilled or fermented, because both are equally bad. I would also prohibit the use of toddy even though it be fresh, because the line of demarkation between fresh and fermented toddy is so indistinct, that not much time elapses before a fresh toddy can degenerate into fermented toddy.

9. I consider absolute prohibition as both feasible and desirable.

10. The means as suggested therein will go a great way towards the controlling of consumption but there ought to be a more effective supervision, as at present the rules as laid down by the department are followed more in the breach than in the observance.

11. Yes. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. In my opinion local option can be effectively put into operation by the advisory committees, as suggested by me in my answer to question no. 13. But in cases where the advisory committees be wanting, the local punchayats be vested with the necessary powers.

12. Yes. I would like the local bodies invested with the powers of determining the number and location of shops in their respective area. But I would not make them responsible for raising any part of the revenue that would be sacrificed by such power. In my opinion it is the duty of Government to look to it, since the excise revenue, which ought to be a municipal or local board revenue, goes into the pockets of Government under the present policy.

13. No. Committees with mere advisory functions will not be useful. In order that they may be useful and effective they must have on them the representative majority of the people and their decision must be binding on the Excise Department.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to an increase in crime and has an effect on the output of work, while the eradication of the evil causes diminution in crime and brings on an increased output of work. It has been tested and found satisfactory in America, for by the cold, calm and unbiassed statistics of the police reports, it has been found that crime in all the " dry " states has diminished by nearly half, and the Lunacy Commissioners report a similar reduction in the number of persons of defective mentality, synchronising with the introduction of prohibition. Then again the American Republic has made its nation one hundred per cent. effective in brain and muscle, by cutting out the canker which is eating the vitals out of every nation in the

world. With the doing away with the drink evil and the introduction of standardisation and mass production it has been found possible in America for a workman to double the wages that are paid for similar work in England and he thus turns out three times the amount of work in the same time and this gives him a prodigious advantage. We are told that while Britain, addicted to the vice of drink, is losing her hold in every market, America has trebled and quadrupled its business. It will thus be seen that the disappearance of the drink evil does cause diminution in crime and brings about an increased output of work.

15. Any reduction or even absolute extinction of revenue will not be so much felt since, according to the note on the financial situation submitted by Mr. Mead, the excise revenue, along with other revenues, goes to finance services like Medical, Courts of Justice and Police. Total disappearance of the evil of drink will make people less prone to disease and will also cause diminution in crime. Thus departments like Medical, Courts of Justice and Police will require correspondingly less financing than formerly.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children prevails amongst the labouring classes. They have no one else to look after their young ones when they go to earn their daily bread and they administer opium to their children in order to lull them to sleep.

18. The increased rate in the infant mortality of the labouring classes is solely due to the administration of opium to young children.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Dr. VELKAR replied to Mr. Madon :—" According to the reports made by Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone at the time of the transference of power from the Peshwa into the hands of the British, I agree, drink was allowed under the administration of the Peshwas on a very small extent. The total income of the Peshwas may be Rs. 2 to 2½ crores, so far as the Deccan was concerned; while the Abkari revenue for the whole of the Deccan was only Rs. 10,000 under the Peshwa rule. The total revenue of the country under the Peshwa rule was Rs. 7 or 8 crores. Thirty years ago the Excise revenue under the British rule was 72 lakhs ; to-day it is Rs. 4 crores for the Presidency of Bombay while the total revenue of the Presidency is about 14 to 15 crores. The consumption has also simultaneously increased with the revenue. I do know that there were two shops of liquor at Garpir and Ambil Odha during the Peshwa's rule, according to the report made by Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone, but, as has been admitted by Mr. Shepherd, the Excise Commissioner, in his note on the Excise Policy of the Government of Bombay, 'the Peshwas were teetotallers' and with the advent of the British rule the drink vice increased.

" Picketing can be carried out peacefully. Government must not look with disgust on the people. They must co-operate with the people. There has been a breach of the peace at certain liquor shops while picketing has been going on, but because of the Government attitude of distrust of the people the liquor vendors as well as the visitors are of opinion that Government is on their side and against the people, who want to do away with the habit of drink by having recourse to peaceful picketing. My experience is that no physical force has been used, such reports are bogus."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—" I would prefer vote by representation."

To Rao Saheb Desai : " I believe that total prohibition is possible within five years. My reasons are these. The psychology of the Indian people is different from that of the Europeans. Drink is considered by religion to be a crime. I am sure prohibition will be successful within five years. Government must prohibit drink outright, as it does in case of other vices ; because vice is after all vice. As regards expenditure I would suggest the lessening of military expenditure and the cheapening of imperial services."

To the President :—" I think that local option should be given a trial."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" The Bhandaris were a militant class before the British rule."

" I know nothing about the origin of the Bhandaris. I cannot say whether the Bhandaris had any other profession under the Peshwas."

To Dr. Patil :—" Drink is a poison ; it is also a poison protoplasmic. By its consumption, withholding power becomes less. I think that even a drop of alcohol is a poison. The craving for alcohol cannot be checked ; it is difficult to control. Certainly, alcohol shortens life.

" I would reduce the hours of sale by closing the shops at 7-30 p.m. instead of at 8-30 p.m., if I can do so gradually. I would ask for the closing of shops on all holidays, and also on pay days. Labourers spend more money on drink on holidays and pay days. Twenty-one ought to be the age limit."

To Mr. Madon :—" Alcohol is a poison. I would not prescribe it unless it is absolutely necessary. Nux vomica and strychnine are poisons but I would prescribe them as tonic because they do not create a craving, while alcohol does. I never drink. The craving for alcohol cannot be controlled unless one has a strong nerve or he is sure not to go to excess."

## No. 24.

### Replies of the EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION, Bombay Branch.

3. No improvements to suggest.

4. Not in favour of total prohibition.

5. No reply.

6. Next generation will probably have acquired a worse vice.

7. No reply.

8. No.

9—10. Recommended.

(*a*), (*c*) and (*f*) In proportion to the population.

(*g*) What is foreign liquor? If native liquors are not obtainable locally, are they "foreign"?

(*j*) Am not in favour.

(*k*) Consider impossible.

As far as foreign, *i. e.*, imported liquors are concerned, favour high import tariff.

11. Local option generally impossible in this country.

12. Consider local bodies should be more competent than any other body or party to regulate grant of licenses and location of shops, but think it unlikely such bodies would exercise restrictive powers if they had to make good loss of revenue from other sources.

13—14. No data to go on.

15. Why not a poll tax of 1 anna per annum. On three hundred million = $18\frac{3}{4}$ crores, or allowing for evasions and short collection, say, 10 crores.

## No. 25.

### Replies of Mr. J. ADDYMAN, J. P., M.L.C., Chairman, European Association, Bombay.

I believe the excise policy of Government, as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India of September 7th, 1905, is a very sound policy, if carried out in actual practice.

Whether the methods adopted hitherto to further this policy are in accordance with the expressed views of Government I am very much inclined to question, since my own observations, covering a period of a good number of years, have proved to my mind, that facilities for drinking have steadily increased and that no real attempt has been made to minimise temptation to those who do not drink, and to discourage excess among those who do, excepting perhaps by making the tax upon liquor as high as possible — a method which has long ago proved to be of no use whatsoever in furthering the settled policy of Government.

I would much prefer to see more practical methods adopted and it is satisfactory to note that Government have introduced a system of rationing and reducing consumption by a certain quantity every year.

These methods are sound and should tend to reduce consumption particularly amongst those who drink to excess, if properly controlled.

Whilst desirous of supporting any measures to prevent excessive drinking, I am not in favour of total prohibition, in fact, I am entirely opposed to such a measure because :—

(*a*) It is an impossible object to attain so long as there exists in the country ways and means for producing alcoholic liquor ;

(*b*) Total prohibition, even if possible by legislation, is an infringement on the individual rights of subjects, and therefore cannot be supported.

Whilst opposed to total prohibition by law I am in favour of checking the growth of the drinking habit by the following means :—

(*a*) Prescribing age-limit for customers of liquor ;

(*b*) Regulating more closely the location of hotels and shops ;

(*c*) Reducing hours of sale in shops, hotels, and particularly in clubs.

These means, backed by a real effort to further education and the providing of necessary open spaces where recreation can be had and encouraged, are all within the scope of Government and the local authorities concerned.

Other means and which are entirely in the hands of the communities and which, to my mind, are the more sure means to progress in moderation and temperance are :—

(*a*) Active voluntary propaganda work with a view to increasing public opinion in favour of the ends in view ;

(*b*) Organising meetings on the lines of the British temperance associations with a view to instilling into the minds of the youth of the country the dangers of intemperance.

Regarding question 12, I consider local bodies should be the most competent to regulate the grant of licenses and location of shops, but I feel it unlikely these bodies would care to exercise restrictive powers if they were made responsible for raising any part of the revenues sacrificed by the exercise of powers conferred.

Drink, when taken to excess, does contribute to crime and does also reduce the working efficiency of its victim, but I claim that neither crime nor reduced efficiency can be charged against moderation.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. ADDYMAN, on behalf of himself and of the European Association, Bombay Branch, replied to the President:—"Whilst appearing as the representative of the European Association I would prefer that the views I express be taken more as my own private views because having only just returned from England I have not had the opportunity to discuss the question with my Committee or members of the Association of which I am President. I feel though that the views I am to express are representative of the European community generally.

"My name is J. Addyman and my profession is that of mill manager of the Bombay Woollen Mills, Dadar, Bombay.

"I have had 14 years experience in India; all this period I have spent in Bombay.

"The Association of which I am President enjoys a membership of between 900 and 1,000.

"The answers already submitted to questions are the outcome of discussion by the Committee of the European Association.

"I am not in favour of total prohibition by legislation, feeling as I do that it is an impossible measure to attain.

"Such a measure, even if possible, is an infringement on the liberties of the people.

"Whilst we Europeans are anxious to do all possible to prevent the spread of drinking to excess it is felt that alcohol in reason is a necessity to us.

"If total prohibition was aimed at, the result would be that people would resort to strict drinking and all evils when carried on and practised secretly become far worse than when practised openly.

"I am therefore in favour of furthering the cause of temperance on voluntary lines such as are obtaining in England where temperance makes good progress.

"I am not in favour of subsidizing temperance associations and suggest same should be carried on as are similar associations in England, the British temperance association, for instance.

"I do not attach much weight to the argument that immature liquors are imported, because obviously this would be against the best business results of those engaged in the trade.

"I am not in favour of local option because in the first place such would lead to interested parties influencing the mind of the illiterate. The party which to my mind would use their influence most would be the licensees.

"In order to bring about a more sober state of things Government can do something in this direction by reducing the hours of sale and bringing all places where liquor is sold, including clubs, under closer superivsion.

"I consider local bodies should be more competent than any other body or party to regulate the granting of licenses and the location of shops but think it unlikely such bodies would exercise restrictive powers if they had to make good loss of revenue from other sources.

"I am of the opinion that whilst excessive drinking contributes to crime moderate drinking does not.

"I have some experience of the labouring classes.

"During the last few years labouring classes have enjoyed increased wages and the expenditure on alcohol has also increased.

"Immediately after pay day there is always a drop in the attendance of labourers.

"The work is not seriously affected by their absence as all mills have to keep a reserve of labour to take the place of those who may be absent. Mill hands seldom complete a full working month but almost invariably absent themselves for two, or three, or more days. About 1,000 men are employed by the Bombay Woollen Manufacturing Company."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"It is quite easy to recognize when a man is drunk. His drinking, I do not think, has any adverse effect on the output. We reserve sufficient numbers to replace any who may be absent. Drunkards are certainly undesirable people and often dangerous. Mill hands and workmen do take to drinking readily and like Europeans many pass over the line of moderation.

"Example is always better than precept.

" I would certainly welcome any legislation to check excess.

" I am inclined to say that children of parents addicted to drink are very likely to become drinkers themselves. Example and heredity make this a standing danger.

" Welfare work ought to be entirely voluntary.

" I do not think that drink is a plague and disease."

To Dr. Patil :—"I am inclined to say that the percentage of people who would prefer total prohibition in European countries is not larger than what it is in this country. You will always find people holding different views. The majority of Europeans in this country are not in favour of total prohibition.

" The European community, when compared to the Indian, is in the minority.

" If the majority of Indians are in favour of total prohibition, the minority of Europeans would of course respect their feelings.

" I quite agree we should try to uplift the ignorant people by checking excessive drinking.

" The age limit should be twenty-one years."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"Alcoholic drink is required to be taken in moderation.

" Intoxicating liquor has its own place in the world from the standpoint of stimulant and in other connections. "

## No. 26.

### REPLIES OF THE BOMBAY LICENSED VICTUALLERS' ASSOCIATION.

I, Dossabhoy Merwanji Umrigar, am the President of the Licensed Victuallers' Association. I am in the firm of Messrs. D. C. Oomrigar and Company, Importers of Foreign Wines and Spirits, since the last 40 years, and I, Manekji Bhicaji Baria, am the Secretary of the above Assicoation. I am in the liquor trade since the last 23 years. We have placed your circular letter before the Committee of our Association, and the answers given by us have been approved by the Committee.

2. (*a*) It is obvious that persons who are habitually given to drink, will do so in spite of severe checks being placed on the sale of liquor. The policy adopted by the Government of India as laid down in their Finance Department Resolution no. 5001 Exc. of 7th September 1905, had solved the difficult problem of interfering with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation, and the provisions made by them for the needs of such persons are in our opinion requisite. In our opinion the present tax upon liquor is sufficiently high for furthering the policy adopted by the Government of India and we are not in favour of raising the tax any further. As to the question of stimulating illicit production we think that any further taxation upon liquor will inevitably stimulate illicit production and will surely drive people to substitute drugs for alcohol. The best method in our opinion to check illicit production is to keep a more vigilant and stricter surveillance on the areas noted for illicit distillation.

(*b*) Since the establishment of the policy as laid down by the Government of India in 1905 though annual sales shew an increase in the consumption of liquor, it will be observed from the administrative reports that in the City of Bombay consumption *per capita* has decreased in the last 20 years. It is a general belief among the people that liquor is a preventive against plague, influenza, malaria, and other like diseases and despite the prevalence of those diseases in these years, it is to be noted that the consumption of liquor *per capita* has decreased instead of increasing inspite of these factors.

3. The unrestricted auction system which was introduced in the Presidency about 5 years ago should be done away with, as it is bad in principle. Under that system it is to the interest of the licensees to push on the sales of liquor as much as possible which conflicts with the principle laid down in the Government of India's Resolution to minimise the sale.

We are of opinion that the old fixed fee system should be reintroduced. The following is the extract from the Report of the Indian Excise Committee (1905-06) published in the year 1907 :—

"194. The disadvantages which its critics find in the system are, first, that it is not worth the while of a man who can make a living otherwise to enter the business if his interest may be terminated at the end of a year by circumstances beyond his control; that in many cases the vend rents have reached a point at which an honest profit is not possible and that in consequence the competition is restricted to persons who are prepared to make dishonest gains; that blackmailing of respectable competitors through threats of outbidding them is not uncommon both before and at the auction; that the system involves loss of dignity to Government more particularly when the auctioning officer attempts to induce rivalry by the introduction of outside competition or is reduced to haggling with an individual who has secured a hold over a particular locality; and that it throws a steadily increasing amount of unpleasant work upon the Collectors and the officers of their staff.

"In respect of the second of the advantages claimed it is urged that, while it is true that the system avoids the creation of vested interests, it goes much too far in the opposite direction; that it renders fixity of tenure impossible and removes all encouragement to respectable management; that it throws the liquor traffic into the hands of a set of shifting licensees who frequently have no other interests in the localities in which they have their shops and are forced to look to the liquor trade for their sole livelihood; that it puts obstacles in the way of necessary changes of sites of shops, structural alterations and sanitary arrangements; and that there are less objectionable means of securing the end in view.

"With regard to the third advantage it is pointed out that it is the exception rather than the rule for the value of a shop ascertained by auction to be a fair value. At the best it is a speculative value depending on the sales of the past year and hopes of the future. To this element of uncertainty are usually added others much more serious. Rivalry, not unfrequently stimulated by unwise subordinates, a spirit of gambling, the excitement of an auction, reluctance to quit a shop in which the holder of his family have been interested, the loss of outstanding debts, the fact that a hereditary drink-seller must hold a shop of some sort or be unable to ply his calling, all tend to inflate the prices. On the other hand frequent combinations and rings or the absence in the case of small shops of any real competition tend to reduce them to the minimum. The net result is that, instead of country spirit paying a known and a definite rate of taxation, it pays one which varies largely through causes over which Government has no control, while the total of it sometimes

exceeds the total taxation on foreign spirit.

"To the last of the arguments in favour of the system it is replied that the auction purchaser, by reason of his having to pay a high competitive price for his privilege of vend, is directly impelled to make money out of his temporary possession of the right by every means in his power, licit or illicit, in other words, that the system induces the very malpractices of which it is expected to give an indication; and from more than one Province instances are cited in which extensive sale of illicit liquor appears to be the only explanation for shopkeepers being able to continue buying shops at the high prices year after year. It is further objected that the high price paid forms the strongest possible stimulus to push sales to the utmost extent in order that the vendor may cover his expenses and make a profit before he has again to fight for the privilege, and possibly lose it; and that instead of making the shopkeeper an aid to the establishment the system throws him into direct opposition to Government."

After considering the various systems the Committee itself expressed its own opinion or conclusion in the following terms:—

"Their conclusion is that in the early and intermediate stages of excise development the auction system has played an important and useful part and that it cannot yet be dispensed with in those areas in which it has not been found possible to introduce efficient control over excise arrangements. It is also for want of a better one the most suitable system in regard to articles which pay no duty and the only mode of taking which is by means of vend fees. But in the case of articles which pay a direct duty, it has disadvantages which outweigh its advantages and should be replaced as soon as efficient control is secured and a proper substitute is found for it. To this end experiments should be made in suitable areas without further delay."

4 and 5. In our opinion total prohibition is absolutely impracticable and undesirable in a vast country like India on account of the formidable objections set out in question 5.

6. This is a problematic question, which we are not in a position to answer.

7. As we consider total prohibition as absolutely impracticable and undesirable, it is not necessary for us to answer this question.

8. Toddy and shindy stand in quite a different category from other alcoholic liquors. We are of opinion that these beverages are *harmless* in their natural state and therefore all unnecessary restrictions should be done away with in order to make it cheap. Heavy taxes in the shape of license fees by auction, tree taxes, etc., should be greatly reduced so that the licensees may not have any temptation to adulterate this harmless drink, which is also regarded as the food of the poor people.

9 and 10. As stated above, absolute prohibition is neither feasible nor desirable, we will deal with the different methods proposed for controlling consumption.

(*a*) This is introduced from the 1st of April 1922. We are of opinion that rationing should be in proportion to the reasonable requirements of the people. Together with this rationing system, there should also be a fixed license fee for each shop according to its consumption, so that the licensees may not be tempted to adopt malpractices to make up the heavy license fees which they pay in auction in competition at present.

(*b*) The price of liquor has already reached its maximum, and any further increase is sure to lead to the introduction of more harmful drugs, illicit distillation, and importation. The present rates in Indian States are much lower than the rates prevailing in the British area, and hence there is much temptation for people to import illicitly liquor from Indian States.

(*c*) We are not in favour of further reducing the number of shops, as it will benefit only the shopkeepers who happen to be in the locality at the expense of those whose shops are closed in a city like Bombay. It will further reduce competition among the traders, and will put the trade in the hands of a few capitalists.

(*d*) At present the shops are closed on certain Hindu and Mahomedan festivals which are quite sufficient.

(*e*) The strength of country liquor which was last year 30° U. P. has been reduced to 40° U. P. from the 1st of April 1922. This further weakening of strength of country liquor will drive the people in industrial cities like Bombay, who prefer strong drinks, to cheap foreign liquor for which there are great facilities there. We are of opinion therefore that it should remain 30° U. P.

(*f*) We think that the shops are properly regulated according to the requirements of the place.

(*g*) We think prohibition of importation of foreign liquor is absolutely impracticable. The present restrictions on foreign liquor are quite sufficient.

(*h*) This has already been done by the Excise Department.

(*i*) The limit age of 16 years exists at present, which we think is quite sufficient.

(*j*) We are in perfect sympathy with any help that may be given to temperance societies and other educative bodies for training people to refrain from excess of drink. Prohibitive legislation is sure to fail in this direction.

(*k*) The restriction that is placed from 1st April 1922 to restrict the sale to one man of more than one bottle a day for removal outside the shop is in our opinion unworkable in a city like Bombay, on account of existing facilities for purchase from other shops.

11, 12 and 13. The present system of regulating shops by local option and Advisory Committee is in our opinion proper and should be continued. The Advisory Committee should be constituted in such a way as to include in it the representatives of the classes that make use of liquor.

14. In India crimes due to drunkenness are very few compared with other European cities. Excessive drinking may cause deterioration in the output of work, but moderate drinking does not in any way retard work.

15. As we do not advocate prohibition, it is not necessary for us to answer this question.

16 and 17. There are already restrictions on the sale of opium and hemp drugs.

It is generally known that women of working classes who go to factories and mills administer opium to infants in order to keep them quiet. This habit is certainly injurious to such infants and the heavy death rate amongst the children of the working classes may be due to this cause.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MANECKJI BHIKAJI BARIA, on behalf of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, replied to the President :—"There are 600 members in the Association. I am the Secretary of the Association.

"West Khandesh, Kanara, and Dharwar Districts are noted for illicit distillation. know nothing about Satara.

"I am of opinion that the consumption of liquor in Bombay has not increased consistently with the increase of the population. I produce from the administration reports the figures for the last twenty years of consumption of liquor in the City of Bombay, which show a decrease of consumption *per capita* in Bombay. I think that Government has carried out its policy in connection with Excise to a certain extent and for this I give credit to the Government and the people.

"Both in the interests of Government and the people the fixed fee system is a good one as compared to the present auction sale system.

"The rationing system should be in proportion to the reasonable requirements of the people.

"Total prohibition is absolutely impracticable and undesirable. If total prohibition is enforced, people will go in for worse drugs, *viz.*, cocaine, opium, etc. It is impracticable also on account of the facilities for smuggling from neighbouring Indian States as well as illicit distillation.

"My Committee is in favour of restricting the age to 16, though personally I am for 18 as that is the recognised age of majority.

"Generally, the work of the Advisory Committees is done by circular only. In some cases they work satisfactorily. The Collector calls their meeting once a year to consult them before the disposal of the shops. The Committee should include in equal proportion the representatives of the drinking and non-drinking classes.

"The restriction that is placed from the 1st April 1922 on the sale to one man not more than one bottle a day for removal outside the shops is in our opinion unworkable in a city like Bombay, on account of existing facilities for purchase from other shops and I will recommend its removal. There is no such restriction on the sale of foreign liquor."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"The present strength of liquor for the Bombay shops is 40° U. P. Now, still head duty is Rs. 7-12-0 per gallon for 40° U. P. By further reducing the strength of country liquor you might drive the consumer to cheap foreign liquor and to stronger and more harmful drugs. After some experience I may get from the sale of liquor of 40° U. P. I can form some opinion about the matter. The strength of foreign liquor should be kept in conformity with that of country liquor. There is no adulteration in whisky at all."

To Dr. Patil :—"After six to eight hours of its being drawn toddy gets sour. After ten hours, it gets fermented and generates alcohol. I have heard some mix with it water, saccharine, and foam syrup. I do not know whether cow-dung ashes are added to it. Owing to the large increased tax on it, it is impossible to get pure toddy. By reducing the taxes and license fees on toddy and giving more facilities for the sale thereof and encouraging the sale of pure toddy the sale of liquor will decrease in course of time. As toddy trees have been mostly destroyed in Bombay by the new development scheme, facilities should be given for the import of the same from the Thana District. Most of the consumers prefer fermented toddy in preference to sweet fresh toddy and it should be allowed for sale for 24 hours from the receipt of the same in shop.

Fermented toddy is less harmful than liquor.

" Preparations of mutton, fish and eggs are sold in liquor shops."

To Mr. Jadhav.—" Rationing must be adopted according to the demands of the people.

" Mandvi, Grant Road and Kalbadevi are not mill areas. I produce the divisional sales in Bombay for the year 1920-21, from which it will be seen that the Parel Division, which is a mill area, does not show more consumption than, for instance, the Kalbadevi area, which is a non-mill area. Generally the mill-hands are not daily consumers of liquor. They drink mostly on pay days and holidays.

" Sales are as follows :—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| Kalbadevi .. .. .. .. | 1,11,458 |
| Byculla .. .. .. .. | 1,04,004 |

" The prohibition of foreign liquor is not possible. We export foreign liquor even outside India."

*Statement showing the number of country liquor shops, sale of, realization and rates per capita consumption of country liquor in Bombay for the period of twenty years ending* 1920-1921.

| Year. | No. of country liquor shops. | Population. | Consumption in proof gallons. | Per capita consumption in drams. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1901-02 .. .. | 296 | 7,76,006 | 6,56,505 | 40·6 | |
| 1902-03 .. .. | 296 | ,, | 4,66,373 | 28·8 | |
| 1903-04 .. .. | 296 | ,, | 7,12,949 | 44·1 | |
| 1904-05 .. .. | 296 | ,, | 7,30,350 | 45·2 | |
| 1905-06 .. .. | 294 | ,, | 5,83,350 | 36·1 | |
| 1906-07 .. .. | 294 | ,, | 5,39,833 | 33·4 | |
| 1907-08 .. .. | 294 | ,, | 5,72,608 | 35·4 | |
| 1908-09 .. .. | 276 | 9,77,822 | 4,95,829 | 24·3 | |
| 1909-10 .. .. | 266 | ,, | 5,00,030 | 24·5 | |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 265 | 9,72,930 | 5,17,224 | 25·5 | |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 256 | 9,79,445 | 4,65,571 | 22·8 | |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 254 | ,, | 4,34,842 | 21·3 | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 250 | ,, | 4,63,984 | 22·7 | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 244 | ,, | 4,60,908 | 22·6 | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 240 | ,, | 4,68,277 | 22·9 | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 240 | ,, | 5,40,192 | 26·5 | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 239 | ,, | 5,96,113 | 29·2 | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 239 | ,, | 6,09,780 | 29·9 | The shops were closed for 22 days. |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 238 | ,, | 6,80,249 | 33·3 | ,, ,, for 31 days. |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 238 | 11,75,914 | 8,36,173 | 34·4* | |

* In the Government Administration Report it is 40·9 drams, according to the population of 1911-12.

*Statement furnished by Mr. Baria, showing the number of shops and the sale of liquor* (30° *U. P.*) *during the year* 1920-21 *in each Division of the City of Bombay.*

| | Division. | No. of shops. | Consumption. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Colaba .. .. .. | 6 | 34,907 |
| 2 | Fort .. .. .. | 13 | 69,002 |
| 3 | Mandvi .. .. .. | 10 | 61,863 |
| 4 | Umerkhadi .. .. .. | 25 | 92,828 |
| 5 | Kalkadevi .. .. .. | 23 | 1,11,458 |
| 6 | Thakurdwar .. .. .. | 12 | 67,694 |
| 7 | Girgaum .. .. .. | 24 | 90,355 |
| 8 | Grant Road .. .. .. | 16 | 81,880 |
| 9 | Byculla .. .. .. | 25 | 1,04,404 |
| 10 | Mazagaon .. .. .. | 17 | 76,736 |
| 11 | Jacob Circle .. .. .. | 8 | 50,321 |
| 12 | Parel .. .. .. | 15 | 78,825 |
| 13 | Dadar .. .. .. | 7 | 30,503 |
| 14 | Mahim .. .. .. | 10 | 31,631 |
| 15 | Matunga .. .. .. | 13 | 48,081 |
| 16 | Worli .. .. .. | 14 | 68,484 |

No. 27.

REPLIES (IN MARATHI) OF Mr. DAMODAR BAPUJI PADWAL OF BOMBAY.

1. I am by profession an Abkari license holder, and my opinion on the following questions has been formed in that capacity.

2. Regarding the following questions, I am of opinion that it has never been possible to stop the drinking and manufacture of liquor in any country, at any time. In India, from very remote times, those who manufacture liquor and those who drink it have regulated their profession and practice. Liquor having been in use in India since the Vedic times, it had to be prohibited by means of religious restrictions. Yet (the measure) was never completely successful. In the time of Asoka, liquor-shops were to be found everywhere, and Government had placed them under their control. For drinkers and sellers (of liquor) rules had been framed, and liquor-shops of those times were called by the dignified name of "shri madira griha," *i.e.*, abode of the goddess liquor. During the Buddhist period, too, similar restrictions were laid down. Hence, it does not seem likely that liquor drinking can be totally prohibited. (Various kinds of) liquor of olden times were invigorating, digestive, exhilarating and capable of preventing diseases; hence no one opposed the drink prohibition (*sic*). There were rules for providing liquor to agriculturists and labourers, and other people. Even soldiers had to be given liquor. It seems liquor had penetrated the Brahmin and other communities. The names of the various kinds of liquor of old were :—"Prasabh Madira," "Mayariyak Madira," "Sahakara Madira," "Jambu Madira," "Drakshi Madira," "Brahmi Madira," etc., and the ingredients from which they were manufactured were used in fixed proportions. Besides, the Kalas, Kalans, Kalwars, Surakars and celebrated physicians of yore used to manufacture liquors as preventives of disease from (extracts of) the *tad* tree and the *mad* (cocoa palm) tree and the like. I think that if Government were to manufacture liquor not likely to be injurious to the people and if the people were to take to it moderately, the health of the people will remain sound and the state, too, will be considerably benefited. If in order to check the vice of drink the duty on liquor is raised, people will not but suffer immeasurable harm. The lower classes (of people) given to drink liquor will always remain steeped in poverty, and being unable to obtain liquor to drink, will not only be depraved but will be tempted to commit crimes. Hence it is impossible to derive any benefit from increasing the duty on liquor. It will be difficult for license holders to get (liquor) shops; and if by raising the duty (on liquor), the price of Indian liquor is made equal to that of foreign liquor, then the trade in Indian liquor will be completely ruined. Hence, I am of opinion that it is not profitable to increase the duty. It is advantageous to locate liquor shops at places where the people have no objection. But proper inquiries should always be made if the statements by the people are true. Because it is my personal experience that complaints of such kind are generally raised wilfully through malice, or with a view to putting the (liquor) shop-owners to a loss.

3. For this reason I desire that the following main changes should take effect. The old practice of extracting liquor from the *tad* and the *mad* should be continued. At present the trade of manufacturing liquor has been lost to the people. Because the manufacturing of liquor from (the extracts of) the *tad* and *mad* trees has ceased. Hence, wherever the *tad*, the *mad*, the *bherli*, the *sindi*, and the *mhowra* trees abound, people should be afforded facilities for starting local distilleries, which should, as before, be under the supervision of Government. It is the general experience that old wines like *rashi, feni, bevada* and the like ward off diseases and arrest their progress. These wines, taken with moderation, not only do no harm, but on the contrary strengthen the physique. *Cajoo* liquor should be made available at all places; the liquor from the *tad*, the *mad* and the like should be got manufactured according to the true process as of old. With the establishment of such distilleries at various places, the people engaged in the liquor trade will be benefited, and the present starvation of thousands of their family members will cease. This will be like giving encouragement to the Bhandaris to carry on their old profession. If the people raise objection where there are liquor-shops, it is to be understood that they are opposed to liquor drinking; hence, I am of opinion that these shops should be located on a high thoroughfare. Because, by doing so, beginners in drinking will feel ashamed suddenly to enter the shop on the high thoroughfare, and thus their vice will receive a check. If, from the beginning, Government fixed the sites of liquor shops and did not allow any change in them except for very pressing reasons, no complaints would be raised by the people now and then. In former times, the manufacturers of liquor and *madi* used to sell them at their homes. But then liquor had not come into so much use as at present. It is only where there is a large population of drunkards that liquor shops are needed. But these shops should not be allowed to be kept open for all time. The time for the sale of liquor should be fixed with foresight on the basis that the vice of the people will be arrested.

4. Immediate total prohibition being impossible, not only will distilleries for the manufacture of liquor spring up everywhere, but every effort will be made to manufacture it illicitly, and this will increase rather than diminish the drink evil.

5. (*a*) It is necessary that liquor should be manufactured from the *tad*, the *mad* and the *cajoo*.

(*b*) In those states where liquor is being manufactured, different regulations have been laid down. Hence the prohibition of liquor in them will depend upon their respective rulers.

(*c*) It would be better not to interfere with the people among whom liquor drinking has prevailed as an old custom, because it is for them a social and a religious concern.

(*d*) It would not be profitable to establish a big distillery for the purpose of manufacturing liquor on a large scale and to make over the same to a company. Hence such distilleries should (be started) at places where there is a (large) population of liquor manufacturers and where the (necessary) trees abound, and the same should be run by handing them over to those people. It is necessary to start such distilleries in every district. It would also be profitable to manufacture liquor from articles of food, grain, flowers and fruit.

(*e*) All the intoxicating things included under (the purview of) the Abkari Department (are considered) to be for the purposes of vice. Those persons given to opium are not likely to satiate their craving by taking liquor, and those given to drinking liquor will not be satisfied with opium, *ganja* or *charas*. It is seldom that a man given to one kind of intoxicant can think it possible to substitute another in its place. *Charas*, *chandol*, *marad*, etc., are intoxicants in an ascending scale. Hence, when one intoxicant is prohibited, it is not possible for a man given to it to satisfy his desire with another intoxicant. On the contrary it will do him harm.

6. Immediate (total) prohibition of liquor will affect the health of the people and hence it is feared diseases will spread among the lower classes. Hence, if liquor drinking is gradually prohibited good effects thereof will not but be produced on the future generation. The vice always obtains in full force among those given to drinking liquor. In India there are many classes and communities, and so owing to caste and religious regulations three-fourths of the society have to go dry. Such is not the case with other countries. Rather than saying that the number of the people given to liquor drinking has increased, it is undoubtedly in evidence that the tax on liquor has increased, and hence it appears as if the number of the people given to drinking has increased, which is not the case.

7. Instead of prohibiting liquor and framing rules for the same, Government should devise means for the education of the lower classes and for their moral well-being. Further, I am of opinion that the vice will be checked by the attempts made by various communities to spread religious and moral instruction among them.

8. If *toddy*, *shindi*, *mhowra*, *cajoo* and other kinds of Indian liquors are manufactured in the best way, there appears no necessity for prohibiting its sale. This has been pointed out before. It is feared that in the very act of trying to restrict indigenous liquor the trade will perhaps be ruined.

9. The answer to this question has been noted before. In order to effect gradual prohibition, restriction will be necessary for locating shops only at places where they are needed, prohibiting the sale of liquor at night, prohibiting liquor to be taken away for home consumption and other purposes. Again, means will have to be devised to restrict the use of foreign liquor. It will not do to prohibit only the Indian liquor.

10. The observations made clause by clause on most of the items under this question are on the whole acceptable. Only, the price of liquor should not be raised. It seems to me that, if possible, the duty on liquor should be gradually reduced. The lesser the strength (of liquor), the more will be its consumption. Much difficulty will not be caused by reducing the shops. Efforts should as far as possible be made to reduce (the consumption of) foreign liquor. Because all the materials for the manufacture of indigenous liquor are here available in abundance. In former times priceless liquor, surpassing the foreign one in quality, used to be manufactured in this country. If permission to manufacture this kind of liquor is given, there will be hardly any necessity to import foreign liquor. Due care should be taken in fixing the age limit. There is no objection to reduce the consumption of liquor by establishing institutions (for the purpose); but this is the duty of the people. In this manner it will be possible to impose restrictions in connection with the matters referred to in this question.

11 and 12. There is no objection to this Department being made over to the people, the municipalities and local boards being empowered as necessary. There is no objection if municipalities are authorised to consider the location of liquor shops. They may be allowed reasonably to increase the tax.

13. My experience is that Advisory Committees are not able to turn out work as they ought to. In forming these committees (care should be taken) that (all) local communities are represented on it and their decision should go by the rule of majority. Persons striving to put a stop to the vice of the people should have a place on such committees. It is desirable to conduct the (Abkari) administration through such committees.

14. It has often been the experience that drunkards are inclined to commit crimes. It has been found that at present drink is at the root of almost all the crimes; but in this the people not given to drink give encouragement. It has also been seen that people without work commit

crimes in the hope of getting wine. It has been made apparent in the courts of law that even educated people instigate drunkards to commit crimes to serve their own ends. All other crimes (it will be seen) are due to disputes for land and for women.

15. If, as I have suggested above, distilleries are started at several places, the income derived from them will go to the State. High class liquors being manufactured in this country, money which would (otherwise) go to foreign countries would be saved, and thus it will be possible to make up the deficit in revenue. If in this manner the industry and trade in the country is encouraged, there will be no objection to increasing the state revenue by other means. It has been a settled fact that excise revenue is 3 to 4 crores. It does not seem likely that great loss will be caused to this income by carrying out the suggestions made above. It is necessary to retrench expenditure. Similarly, several industries being encouraged, there need be no anxiety in the matter of expenditure, even though some taxes on the forest produce are done away with. But much attention will have to be devoted to the growth of indigenous industry. If we consider the present state of revenue and expenditure, it is apparent that expenditure rather than revenue has increased. If in the matter of expenditure all possible retrenchment is effected all difficulties under that head will be removed. I am of opinion that though all the reforms suggested above are carried out the revenue will not be materially affected.

16 and 17. Opium is generally used mostly among the people of Kathiawar, Gujarat and Upper India. In Bombay (City) the Muhammadans and Gujaratis are habituated to it. The growth of their body is arrested and the blood loses vigour. Not only do they turn pale, but medicine produces no effect on the opium eater. It is necessary to reduce as much as possible the number of opium or ganja shops. Pills prepared from opium are administered to their children by Ghatis, Muhammadans, Gujaratis and other people and by that harm is done to them for life ; hence the use of opium should be restricted.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. PADWAL replied to Mr. Jadhav :—" I have two liquors hops. One is at Mahim and another at Parel. There is an approximate sale of 10 gallons. Shops are open all over the month. Drinking cannot be stopped all of a sudden. It is my personal opinion that drinking is in existence since Vedic times. Liquor is not prohibited in the Hindu religion. Baliram was a horrible drunkard. The liquor used at present is not of a good quality. In my opinion this vice should be gradually eradicated. I have not got any data as regards my statement about crimes. The former system of distilling liquor from *tad* and *mad* was a good one. The liquor obtained from these trees would be just the same as the present 60° U. P. Drunkards will drink in any circumstance even though the shops will be kept in out-of-the-way places. The present time of opening and closing liquor shops is alright. Kolis and Indian Christians require liquor at the time of their marriage ceremonies. Opium must be curtailed. Excessive drink results in crime. Other drugs taken in lieu of wine create disease."

To Dr. Patil :—" As to my view that drink existed in India in Vedic times, I have no authority save that of tradition. "

" For two or three days after pay day the increase in sale amounts nearly to three times and there is much overcrowding of shops.

" We prepare eatables in liquor shops suited to the taste of the customers and, if a person comes only for these, we sell them to him though he may not buy liquor. If he asks for liquor we serve him that also. Liquor when taken with these substances is less intoxicating. "*

* The report of his oral evidence was supplied to the witness for remarks, but none were offered by him.

## BELGAUM WITNESSES.

### No. 28.

### REPLIES OF KHAN BAHADUR ARDESHIR NAVROJI OF BELGAUM.

1. Abkari contractor of very long standing—hence personal experience. Also President, Belgaum Municipality, and District Local Board, etc.

2. (*a*) The principles underlying the Excise policy of Government are generally sound.
(*b*) The object in view has been only partially attained and not totally.

It has not put an effective check on intemperance.

3. The changes I would suggest are :—

(*a*) The strengths of the liquor in each and every shop in each district should be the same.
(*b*) Also the selling price.
(*c*) Abolition of the auction system of shops and the reintroduction of the fixed fee system on correct calculation as recommended by the Sir Anthony MacDonald Commission, whose conclusions were arrived at after most minute and extensive inquiry and investigation.

4. No. It is not a practical measure.

5. Am in favour of partial prohibition.

(*a*) This is an extremely difficult problem. *Very costly and honest preventive establishments only* could cope with these malpractices to any appreciable extent.
(*b*) *Vide* answer (*a*) above.
(*c*) Partial prohibition would not affect this.
(*d*) *Vide* latter part of answer (*a*) above.
(*e*) This difficulty would not arise under partial prohibition.

6. *Vide* answer 4 above. Total prohibition not being practical, it cannot have a different effect on the next generation.

7. Legislation in such matters is *worse* than useless (*vide* results in America, etc).

The education of the people, and measures taken by the different caste *punchas* in their respective castes is the only sensible and correct remedy.

8. I should not apply the principle of prohibition to fermented liquors.

I should not prohibit the use of toddy or shindy under any circumstance, because pure fresh toddy or "nira" is a delicious, natural, sweet, syrup-like drink, free from any intoxicating effects whatever.

And even in its fermented state toddy is a comparatively mild intoxicating drink which serves as both a comparatively wholesome cheap food and drink for the poor.

In times of famine and scarcity, it is not only a *great boon* to the poor, but an *urgent necessity*, and to deprive them of it would be a piece of *the most thoughtless cruelty*.

9. The present policy of Government together with the changes suggested in my answer 3 above.

10. I am in favour of all the means suggested, except (*a*) which would attempt total prohibition, which as shown above is *not only impracticable*, but *dangerous* and *ruinous*, as it would induce *more crime*.

11. Local option may be introduced under certain *restrictions of expert advice ;* for as a rule the local residents of a locality are *entirely innocent* of the details of these somewhat intricate problems which require much careful study.

12. It would be but just and fair to invest municipalities with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, which are small when compared to district local board areas, but I would not recommend the investing of such powers to district or taluka local boards, as the members of these bodies are hardly in touch with these matters or have studied them carefully and are therefore likely to make serious blunders.

13. No. The Collector and other local experts should constitute these Committees.

14. Not appreciably in this District.

15. My recommendations are not likely to cause any appreciable reduction of Excise revenue.

---

### ORAL EVIDENCE.

Khan Bahadur ARDESHIR NAVROJI replied to the President :—"For the last 30 years I have been the contractor of liquor in the districts of Belgaum, Dharwar and Kanara. I am personally in touch with Belgaum. My people now contract in other

places. I had Abkari contracts in the Karjat and Panvel Talukas, but mainly in the Belgaum District for over 30 years. My family has been connected with this business for two generations. Karjat and Panvel are on the sea coast where fishermen are the principal customers for liquor. In Karjat agriculturists also are addicted to drinking. But their number is very small. The general impression amongst the people that fishermen who have to be in water all the day do require some kind of drink is quite correct. They have to contend against the elements and as they are generally ill-clad they take drink to keep them quite fit for the next day. If total prohibition is introduced in Panvel, Kolis will suffer terribly in health. It will be a great hardship to them. I do not know whether women take part in fishing to help their husbands. I do not think women drink so much. The percentage of women drinkers is infinitesimally small when compared to that of men. They are not so much open to temptation as their husbands. I cannot tell off-hand how many shops there are in the Karjat Taluka. Belgaum is an agricultural town, having a population of 45,000 (including the Cantonment). Belgaum Cantonment had a large number of European troops during the War and they had also highly paid menials and workmen amongst them, who were always in need of drink. At that time liquor trade was brisk. The same was the case with other trades, *viz.*, tailors, barbers, etc. Most probably that must have been the reason for a larger consumption of liquor in both the City and the Cantonment. Cantonment people prefer stronger liquor—30° U.P. Generally Marathas, Mahomadans and other classes, including sweepers, tailors, barbers, carpenters and so on, are addicted to drinking. There are no non-drinking communities in Belgaum. The upper classes take European liquors. Higher classes generally include Jains, Brahmins, Europeans and Eurasians. They do not patronize country liquor. Those among them who drink patronize foreign liquor. We never keep foreign liquor.

"Much illicit distillation and smuggling is rife in the Belgaum District and Portuguese territory. The District is intermingled with Indian States, *viz.*, Sawantwadi, Jamkhandi, Terdal and Mudhol, etc. Illicit Goa liquor comes from Goa. In case total prohibition is brought into effect, the door will remain wide open for smuggling and illicit distillation, which cannot be possibly prevented by the present Excise Staff and, if additional staff is required for this purpose, it will not be available ; and it will undoubtedly be still more difficult to prevent smuggling and illicit distillation if total prohibition is introduced. In fact illicit distillation is going on in almost all villages and even those within the range of three miles from Belgaum though the Abkari Department is doing its best to put a stop to it. Special inducement for illicit liquor in the Belgaum District is due to the cheapness of jaggery, molasses and bark of *hiwra* trees from which liquor can be distilled. Two chatties and one bamboo are the only things required for the manufacture. Abkari authorities are successful in detecting illicit distillation cases only if there is any split among the villagers. The Superintendent of Excise is generally the superior officer of the local Excise Department, who lives in Castle Rock for six months in the year, and in Belgaum for the other six months. We have not approached Government to reduce the price of liquor with a view to put a stop to its illicit distillation, but we simply carry out the orders of Government. The principal thing is that the Government policy is all right but that it is not carried out up to the mark. Abkari authorities do not generally pay more attention to their principal duty which is the checking of illicit distillation and smuggling. They complain that they have insufficient means. Dharwar, Kanara and so on are all on a par with Belgaum, so far as illicit distillation and smuggling are concerned. Probably the whole Presidency is doing the same thing. If total prohibition is introduced there will be a larger amount of illicit distillation. On the contrary it will provide facilities for smugglers and illicit liquor will be available in various places. During the picketing days smuggling was undoubtedly great. Since then the evil has increased tremendously. I think the greater the pay of the Abkari officers the lesser the temptation for corruption. Formerly the Police also were authorised to deal with illicit distillation and smuggling cases, etc., but now that system has been changed by Government, because the Police were found to be harassing shop-keepers. Now there are constables under Abkari officers. Abkari Inspectors take more interest in their work and there is some sort of supervision. Abkari Inspectors and sub-Inspectors may be replaced by Police Inspectors and sub-Inspectors but not below that rank.

"When speaking about legislation being worse than useless, I believe that efforts from within are better than efforts from outside.

"I have some experience about *punchas*. There was formerly social ostracism but now it is extinct. At that time the *punchas* existed almost in each gallery. If *punchas* will take this work of prohibition into their own hands they will be the better people to reduce the consumption of liquor to some appreciable extent.

"To have "nira" you have to take an earthen pot, wash it clean, put it on the tree and take it down at day-break. It will last for about six hours. Stale toddy is put inside the chatty to give rise to fermentation. The majority of drunkards prefer intoxicating stuff. Total prohibition must not at all affect toddy and shindi, which are considered just like food. India is periodically a prey to famines. Toddy in certain cases is wholesome stuff, which is not at all injurious unless it is fermented. Toddy cannot satisfy a drunkard as country liquor will. But something is better than nothing. Iti s less harmful to the physique. In Surat and Navsari

people drink toddy largely. Toddy fermented becomes acid. Toddy is comparatively cheaper than food in famine times. There are large plantations of toddy in this District. They grow generally in nullahs. These trees can be grown almost in all parts of the Presidency.

"Local option is a complicated business. So many people's interests clash there. I am not against drinking in moderation. I seriously believe that it will be an interference in the liberty of the people who drink, if local option is given effect to. I am against any legislation in favour of total prohibition. Political factions in the case of women also will have some effect, because a good wife is sure to side with her husband. Though women are great sufferers in case their husbands take to excessive drinking, I am not inclined to give women the right to vote, as they will naturally take side in favour of total prohibition in the long run. Though hard drunkards realize in their sober moments that what they are doing is not in their own interest, still they are not competent to exercise their right of local option. A drunkard, though he knows drinking is bad, still finds it beyond his control to stop his usual drink.

"I have experience about Advisory Committees. Advisory Committees take very little interest in their work. It is more due to general apathy than to the dominating influence of Government officers in dealing with the questions before them. Their recommendations are hardly carried out, and hence they cease to take keen interest in such matters; still I think they should not be disheartened. They ought to persevere. If necessary, they should make their voice heard through legislation, but they should not give up in despair. They should always be optimistic in their views. Advisory Committees are in existence for the last 8 or 10 years. In many cases their instructions are carried out. Failing all other efforts, Advisory Committees, if well constituted, will minimize the evil of drinking to some extent. In the first stages these members should be nominated by Government and gradually the right of election should be given to the people."

To Mr. Madon :—"By 'intemperance' I mean drinking carried to excess. As an internal suggestion I may say that all country liquor should be of uniform strength. By 'partial prohibition' I mean difficulty in getting liquor. I think high prices for liquor will really reduce the consumption of liquor in a poor district like Belgaum. People drink toddy. Liquor shops should be put in out-of-the-way places. The majority of drunkards are low class people. High class people drink foreign liquor. One bottle is allowed to be carried and possessed in town and three in villages. I think it should be one bottle all round. Very few take one bottle. Eight drams make one bottle and six bottles make one gallon. Very few people take liquor home and those who take it home are moderate drinkers."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"The fixed fee system is a good one. The auction sale system is very bad. In auctions people bid like mad men, and afterwards to fill up the shortage of money they are required to sell their houses and property; in addition to this, smuggling and a good many other things go on in various ways. After bidding like anything shop-keepers never take to illicit distillation with a view to sell it as licit liquor because there is a likelihood of their being detected. The auction system combined with the rationing system is bad, because I am of opinion that the combination of these two systems will undoubtedly be of no use. I object to all auction sale systems. Fixed fee system as is in the United Provinces is better."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Caste *punchas* will be of great use. To a certain extent the rationing of shops will be all right. I cannot go below a certain minimum. It is against the morals."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"The object of rationing should be to introduce the ordinary normal sale of ordinary quantity. Rationing should be introduced very carefully. Rationing should not give scope to illicit distillation of liquor, but it should conduce to stop abnormal sale. *Punchas* will be of great use. This is my opinion which I have formed by the experience I have had during the last few months. Caste *punchas* sometimes indulge in drink. I have come across *punchas* who are sober. If people are determined to prevent or decrease drunkenness they can do this through their *punchas*. There are *punchas* in almost every lane and caste. They will attempt to put a stop to the consumption of drink in excess, instead of creating new organizations and setting them in motion. All this is possible if leaders will take the matter into their own hands. It will not be correct on the part of Government to pass any legislation prohibiting all liquor all at once. I am sure Government will not interfere with the rights of moderate drinkers. I think toddy is cheap food. Particularly in famine times Government allow people to live on mhowra flowers. It has sufficient sustaining power."

To Dr. Patil :—"Age limit should be sixteen years. That is the reasonable age. But if you so desire it can be carried to 18 years. For the purpose of prohibition all remedies should be internal. Total prohibition will mean hardship to those who are not doing any harm to themselves or others and who are moderate drinkers. Arsenic is a deadly poison if not moderately taken to make pure the blood in the human system, but it is the best purifier if taken in moderation. There are many people who only take drink at times. They never go to

excess. In such cases prohibition will be a hardship. Moderate drinking will never create craving for more drink. Excess drink creates craving. I would like total prohibition if it is practicable. Do not force your will upon those who are moderate drinkers.

"If you say that even moderates (and those to whom a little stimulant is sometimes necessary) should give up drink totally merely to set an example to others, it is only a matter of opinion."

*Statement produced by Khan Bahadur Ardeshir Navroji showing the consumption of country liqour in the Belgaum District :—*

| Year. | Population. | Consumption in gallons. | Rate per head. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1894–1895 .. .. .. .. | 1,013,261 | 61,377 | 2·9 |
| 1895–1896 .. .. .. .. | 1,013,261 | 67,003 | 3·2 |
| 1896–1897 .. .. .. .. | 1,013,261 | 66,436 | 3·1 |
| 1897–1898 .. .. .. .. | 1,013,261 | 53,689 | 2·5 |
| 1898–1899 .. .. .. .. | 1,013,261 | 48,600 | 2·3 |
| 1900–1901 .. .. .. .. | 994,209 | 40,753 | 2·0 |
| 1901–1902 .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 46,567 | 2·2 |
| 8 months ending March 1903 .. .. .. | 993,976 | 24,979 | 1·2 |
| 1903–1904 .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 42,878 | 2·1 |
| 1904–1905 .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 55,743 | 2·7 |
| 1905–1906 .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 45,451 | 2·2 |
| 1906–1907 .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 42,077 | 2·0 |
| 1907–1908. .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 41,927 | 2·0 |
| 1908–1909 .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 49,549 | 2·6 |
| 1909–1910 .. .. .. .. | 993,976 | 50,405 | 2·4 |
| 1910–1911 .. .. .. .. | 943,875 | 59,899 | 3·05 |
| 1911–1912 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 69,514 | 3·5 |
| 1912–1913 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 74,780 | 3·8 |
| 1913–1914 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 73,505 | 3·7 |
| 1914–1915 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 61,237 | 3·1 |
| 1915–1916 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 57,453 | 2·9 |
| 1916–1917 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 67,264 | 3·4 |
| 1918–1919 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 69,644 | 3·5 |
| 1919–1920 .. .. .. .. | 943,820 | 75,026 | 3·8 |

No. 29.

REPLIES OF MR. M. S. KARAKA OF DHARWAR.

I am a merchant and contractor. I have been connected with the country liquor trade from last year and before that had a partnership in the distillery contract at Dharwar. I was a municipal and taluka board member.

2. (*a*) I agree with the Excise policy of Government.

(*b*) The number of shops have been reduced by about 1,000 since 1905-06. There is no appreciable reduction in the consumption of liquor. Although the number of shops are reduced in the last fifteen years and the duty enhanced by about 300 per cent. the consumption is practically at the same level. The consumption per head per year is little less than a bottle.

The question of intemperance is a very wide question. My experience is many drink little and in moderation as a relaxation after their day's work, and others out of sheer habit formed of years; a few indulge in frequent drinks: this class, among working class of people, is ordinarily loafers and ruffians without any occupation.

3. I consider the rationing of shops as introduced this year, the location of shops in prominent areas and the facility for the people to have a drink is the only effective check on immoderation. By this, there would be less temptation to drink to intemperance and taking to deleterious and harmful drugs.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition, as I consider it absolutely impractical. The total failure of the non-co-operation movement in this direction is a sufficient indication of entertaining any such idea, though their movement was accompanied with bodily violence and humiliation in various forms to the poor class drinkers. These drinkers went to adjoining village shops and fetched the drink, where there was no picketing and took to deleterious drugs, such as *ganja*, *bhang*, opium and even denatured (methylated) spirits.

5. I favour partial prohibition.

(*a*) By detecting and punishing such offences.

(*b*) By punishing smugglers.

(*c*) Habits and customs of years cannot be safely interfered with.

(*d*) I am not in favour of increasing establishment in the Excise Department for this purpose but the police could be very effectually delegated with these duties along with their ordinary duties.

(*e*) The consumers of country liquor, who are mostly labourers, would take to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs, if there is no facility for them to take their usual peg of liquor.

6. Prohibition may have a beneficial influence on the next generation as long as such prohibition lasts. Strict check would have to be maintained on the illicit manufacture of liquor or facility of obtaining drugs through other means.

7. It is impossible even by legislature to completely stop consumption of liquor.

8. I do not advocate the principle of complete prohibition to either distilled or fermented liquor. I would not prohibit toddy or shindy.

9. I would recommend the rationing of shops, gradually decreasing the quantity by 5 per cent. and by reducing and locating the shops in prominent places, as the present practise is to drink stealthily.

10. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) It should not be increased to more than what it is now, as it tells economically on the wages of the country.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) The present timing answers this sufficiently. If days are reduced, it may lead to all the evils enumerated above, such as, illicit distillation, the drug evil, etc.

(*e*) Yes, it should be reduced to 60 U. P.

(*f*) The shops should be placed in prominent localities.

(*g*) Foreign liquor should be equally checked and controlled as regards duty, hours of sale, etc. Otherwise people would take to it, being 25 U. P.

(*h*) "On" and "off" licenses should be kept on. Otherwise there would be great hardship to the people.

(*i*) The present age limit of sixteen is sufficient.

(*j*) It is not advisable to subsidise any temperance associations. They are social movements and, if at all, should entirely be in the hands of missionaries and salvation armies.

(*k*) Removal of liquor from shops should be restricted to half a gallon.

11. No. No powers of any nature should be delegated to municipalities or local boards. It would cause absolute chaos.

12. Municipalities or local boards should not be invested with powers to determine the location of shops, as they are not fit bodies to deal with such matters. The discretion should be left entirely to the Collectors. The municipal finances generally are in such chaos and muddle that it is next to impossible to expect them to make good any revenue sacrificed on such account.

13. Advisory Committees are useful institutions, but, so far, to my knowledge, they have done no work. The board should be increased in number, say to ten members. The board should comprise of members elected by the municipality, *ex-officio* members, one excise contractor from the taluka, and presided over by the Collector.

14. The evil of drink, I do not think, has had any increase in crime. I should think it has an effect on the output of work.

15. I would suggest the following sources of revenue be enhanced to make up the reduction in Excise revenue.

(*a*) Land revenue should be increased by 50 per cent. The present land value has increased considerably due to the excellent profits made by cultivators of land. The land-owners, have in consequence, increased their rental value, and are taking enhanced rents from their ryots

(*b*) 25 per cent. of land revenue now goes out in paying "judy" to Inamdars, Desais, and such other Watandars. Income-tax is not levied on this judy. It is desirable that income-tax be levied on this, as the Watandars enjoy equal or better rights and privileges than the ordinary land-owner. This will bring an appreciable excess of revenue to Government.

16. (*c*) Forests should be better developed and made to pay better revenue.

Hemp drugs and opium should be absolutely cut out. They are very injurious and deleterious to health.

17. Opium is given to children by labourers, mill-hands, etc. I am not in a position to answer the question regarding the death-rate among children.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KARAKA replied to the President:—"I have one liquor shop in Dharwar and one in Hubli. There are three liquor shops in Dharwar and Hubli each, out of which one at each place belongs to me. In Hubli there is a large population of labourers who attend railway workshops, and there are mills and various jins and presses. It is an industrial centre. There is a wide scope there for labourers to earn high wages. Mahomedans, weavers and workmen are generally my customers. Dharwar is comparatively a town of low population. It is not an industrial centre. In the cotton season jinning factories are at work. Labourers are directed to my shop. There is a very small number of people of high class who visit my shop. It is not on the increase. I think both the "on" and "off" shop systems should be given effect to. Dharwar is having both "on" and "off" shop systems. I prefer both "on" and "off" shop systems. One bottle and three bottles are allowed to be purchased in town and rural areas respectively. Dharwar and Hubli are urban areas. I like to recommend a uniform system in rural and urban areas. The average quantity of liquor consumed by a drinker is one dram which costs four annas. A bottle contains 8 drams, and one gallon is equal to 6 bottles. The Goanese drink even a pint. So there is a tendency to smuggle liquor as he cannot keep more than one bottle. Even the temporary possession of more bottles than the actual number stipulated is punishable. I cannot hazard an opinion whether one is allowed to have more than one bottle, if the guest will keep his bottle separately.

"It will only have to be guessed within what period the rationing system will be given full to. I cannot say to-day what will be the minimum period. But one thing is certain that rationing will have a good effect on the public.

"In my opinion 16 should be the age limit. I will not favour an increase in the prescribed age, because the salesman will find it very difficult whether it is really 16 or 18 and I do not find many below 20 drinking.

"The present non-co-operators forming temperance associations are likely to do mischief. So I am not in favour of subsidizing temperance associations. Unless and until they have proved their worth, Government should not render them any sort of help. The same reasons are also applicable in the case of local option. The present atmosphere is not suitable to give effect to local option. It should solely be left to Government. I am in favour of total prohibition if carried out by legislative enactment. I oppose local option mainly on one ground that the people will be influenced by influential people in their own villages and the ultimate end of the option will not be achieved. I cannot tell whether the majority of the population is in favour of total prohibition. In my opinion the question comes from those who are non-drinkers and very intelligent people.

"Advisory Committees should be recommendatory only for a year, and then they should have some power. During their first year or two they should simply make recommendations and, if they are found suitable, powers should be given to them by legislation. The land revenue that goes out in paying "judy" to Inamdars, Desais and such other Watandars should be charged with income-tax, which they now do not pay."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"House-holders are already taxed. By "feasibility" I mean that there will be no temptation for smuggling or having illicit distillation of liquor. The non-co-operation movement has failed. As a result of the movement last year there is a reduction of only one dram in the Dharwar Taluka. Now almost all are drinking in increased quantities. Volunteers are also drinking. Before they were taken as volunteers, they were drinking. Practically they were hired for the volunteer work. Along with the Excise officers, power should also be delegated to the police authorities to detect cases of illicit distillation. Excise officers have a few peons only and they are not in a position to get information. Every labourer wants to have his drink and accordingly he demands a high wage to meet the expense of his drink and also other household expenses from his employers. Output is generally affected by employing labourers who are drunkards. In Dharwar District there has been no famine for the last six years; still labour charges have gone high. Ordinary expenditure has also increased. I cannot give off-hand answer as to whether owners of factories should not be charged with a tax as they will have efficient labour as a result of total prohibition. Opium is generally worse than liquor. I cannot distinguish between a drunkard and an opium eater."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"The rationing system should be given an experiment. If liquor shops are not kept in prominent places there is likelihood of people having their drink stealthily. They should be in the market places where they can be seen. I cannot tell you any other reason than the one given in my written statement for increasing 50 per cent. land revenue."

To Dr. Patil :—"Instead of subsidizing temperance associations comprised of men with present political ideas, missionaries and Salvation Armies should be given all possible help for carrying out the prohibition work, as they have gained general confidence. Our people cannot do that work methodically, as salvation armies and missionaries have done. Our methods are violent. There is one example of Dharwar before us."

*Statement produced by Mr. Karaka showing the consumption of liquor in the Dharwar and Hubli Talukas.*

| | Dharwar Taluka. | Hubli Taluka. |
|---|---|---|
| Population in 1911 | 1,06,456 | 1,22,795 |
| Do. in 1921 | 1,08,305 | 1,29,001 |
| | Galls. | Galls. |
| Consumption in 1913-14 | 16,451 | 34,738 |
| 14-15 | 14,245 | 28,288 |
| 15-16 | 14,511 | 26,645 |
| 16-17 | 15,243 | 28,625 |
| 17-18 | 14,144 | 26,372 |
| 18-19 | 12,696 | 20,188 |
| 19-20 | 13.464 | 16,044 |
| 20-21 | 12,155 | 14,177 |
| 21-22 | 9,248 | 14,911 |
| *Per capita* consumption in drams. | | |
| | Drams. | Drams. |
| In 1913-14 | 7·4 | 13·6 |
| 14-15 | 6·4 | 11·0 |
| 15-16 | 6·5 | 10·4 |
| 16-17 | 6·8 | 11·2 |
| 17-18 | 5·3 | 10·3 |
| 18-19 | 5·7 | 7·9 |
| 19-20 | 6·0 | 6·2 |
| 20-21 | 5·4 | 5·5 |
| 21-22 | 4·1 | 5·5 |

## No. 30.

REPLIES OF MR. G. L. MACGREGOR, I.C.S., COLLECTOR OF BELGAUM.

1. I have served in the Revenue Department of the Bombay Presidency for 19 years and 3 years as Collector of Customs, Calcutta.

2. As I do not believe that people can be made to abstain totally from alcohol by legislation and it is essential to avoid the ill-effects of drinking inferior beverages, I agree with the policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905. As for actual results I do not think in the past the process was sufficiently accelerated, but it is now progressing.

3. The policy of reducing shops has been abandoned in favour of rationing. I think this is a step in the right direction. Reducing the number of shops amounted to increasing the consumption in other shops and the advance towards temperance was *nil*. Some little progress was however made in removing shops into less conspicuous localities. Rationing however has its limitations. The licensee will naturally get rid of his stock at the beginning of each rationing period as soon as possible so as to make certain of selling it and the hard drinker will also drink as much as he can at the same period as he will fear that stocks will be exhausted. If this process results in the increase of illicit liquor, it will fail in its object of reducing consumption. There is, therefore, no chance of consumption being abolished within a fixed period. Licit consumption could be abolished, but its place would be taken either by illicit liquor and therefore unwholesome liquor, or some other stimulant such as cocaine or drugs or *bhang*, which are even more harmful than liquor. The surest method of reducing consumption is by social pressure, with which Government cannot of course deal.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition. I consider it impracticable, as stated above.

5. I think partial prohibition can be obtained, but the reduction in consumption will not be very large. In a district where palm trees, mhowra trees and kaju trees are not grown in quantity it will be much more expensive to distil illicit liquor as the base would become expensive. But other bases, *e.g.*, jagri and all grain, can be used and will be used for illicit distillation, and partial prohibition cannot go beyond the point where illicit distillation will increase. The stage in restriction at which this would come would vary in proportion to the facility with which illicit bases can be obtained. It is impracticable, if liquor becomes out of the reach of the ordinary man, to stop illicit distillation. A couple of earthen pots, a bomboo pipe and a little clay are all that is necessary to extract liquor from vegetable product. This can be broken up at once on the imminence of detection and can be concealed easily in growing crops. No amount of excise supervision can stamp it out; the best cure for it is in making liquor cheaper.

(*b*) There is an enormous quantity of smuggling between Portuguese territory and British India and a considerable amount probably from Indian States, though I have had no experience of that. The other day in Belgaum the Excise Police secured a single seizure of over 100 bottles of Goa liquor.

(*c*) The only interference in these customs and habits that is practicable is through social pressure, not Government action. There are many castes that drink to excess, but I think there is an actual decrease in their case as education spreads and the desire to rise in the social scale grows, but this is countered by the increase of drinking in castes whose rules prohibit drink.

(*d*) As stated above I do not believe in any strength of preventive establishment which can cope with illicit distillation, if partial prohibition has raised the accessibility of liquor beyond a certain point. And no doubt illegal exactions will be levied by the establishment.

(*e*) This is not a probability but a certainty, *vide* the condition of the United States to-day.

6. If a generation arose that knew no alcohol it would be perfectly easy for them to keep away from it. But as I hold that you cannot cure a generation completely of the desire for liquor, which is a part of nature, all animals, for instance, like alcohol, such a generation cannot be born. A good deal can be done in the social way to counteract the desire for liquor, by making use of tea-shops and places of amusement in which a worker can spend his leisure hours without being exposed to the temptation of drinking, but prohibition by law will not result in sobriety.

8. I would not prohibit the use of toddy. It would be extremely difficult to do so. That there is a demand for fresh, unfermented toddy, except in the case of a very few persons, is a fiction. Most of the customers at toddy shops like their toddy fermented and well fermented. I believe Doctors say that "toddy is a food." It may be so. Fermented liquors I believe do little harm and I would not prohibit them, nor would I prevent wines. But wine is not grown in India.

9. As stated above I would rely on social pressure and counter-attractions. A number of people take to liquor because they have no other means of exhilaration and forgetting their dull lives. Make their lives brighter. I would not control consumption beyond a very slight decrease, say, 20 per cent.

10. I would recommend all the methods except (*c*) and (*j*). Where there is an excessive number of shops I would reduce them to a certain limit, but the process cannot be carried on to the extinction of all the shops or anything like all. I think (*j*) would be waste of money. I think (*k*) is useless. The presence of other convivial souls leads to harder drinking. Fewer people are affected, if liquor is consumed on private premises.

11 and 12. No.

13. My Advisory Committee in Belgaum take very little interest in such matters. It has very little scope. There are only 4 shops in the whole of Belgaum City and Cantonment, a population of 45,000. But they do not seem able to select an alternative site when there is agitation for such. I advocate no change.

14. In theory drink does affect crime, in practice very little. It greatly affects the output of work.

15. I do not anticipate any appreciable loss. It should be made up by the increased price of the liquor. It will be many years before the conditions of life are so brightened as to cause serious depreciation of revenue. I should increase the stamp revenue. There is much needless litigation and I should make it more expensive.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MACGREGOR replied to the President:—"I have served in Kanara, Dharwar, Kolaba and Thana. There is enormous drink in Thana. Warlees, fishermen and Indian Christians are all addicted to drinking. Thana District is known for illicit distillation. In Bhiwandi, Vada, Murbad illicit distillation is going on as there is an abundance of mhowra trees. In Bassein Taluka they prepare liquor from jaggery. The greater the isolation the greater the probability of illicit distillation. I do not think that Thana is more addicted to drinking because of its being near Bombay. In Umbargaon and Dahanu they drink just as hard as in Bassein. Kanara and Belgaum border on Portuguese territory and there is a probability of a good deal of liquor being smuggled in these districts. Except Indian Christians in Khanapur, I do not think that there are communities which are more prone to drinking than others as in Thana. If total prohibition is given effect to, these communities will think that their privilege is being taken away, which they consider as their absolute right or *hak*. The result of total prohibition will be that people will have recourse to illicit distillation of liquor and they will drink a large quantity of inferior liquor.

"I cannot tell you much about Poona, as I was there for a very short time.

"Excise in Bombay is under the Collector.

"Reducing the number of shops will amount to increasing consumption in other shops. This system does not necessarily conduce to minimize the reduction in consumption.

"I think *panchas* might take various steps as they do in social matters. Communal *panchas* will exercise salutary effect on the question of drink and that is the only way.

"Total prohibition will never put a stop to illicit distillation and smuggling. All animals like alcohol; horses, dogs and birds like it. To tackle this problem we can somewhat reduce the quantity of liquor. But Government cannot do anything more. Liquor to the value of 150 millions sterling was caught in the trade of America. To stand such losses after the proclamation of total prohibition, there must be considerable trade. I am sorry I cannot give the exact reference as to where I read it, but I think it was about three months ago in the *Times of India*.

"It will be extremely difficult to stop toddy. It is my experience that people appreciate fermented toddy. Toddy is less harmful than country liquor.

"By 'counter attractions' I mean better homes and better conditions of living and they should have better environment.

"I have no objection to subsidizing temperance associations if they will very carefully use their funds.

"I am in favour of the 'off' shop system. My mind is wavering as to which I should prefer. I cannot give any decision as to which of 'on' and 'off' shop systems will be useful.

"Local option will be an interference with those who are in the habit of drinking in moderation.

"If there is a majority of non-drinkers in any particular locality the minority will be neglected. Those who are addicted to drink will never vote against drink.

"Local bodies as a class are non-drinkers and they might base their recommendations to the detriment of the minority of moderate drinkers.

"Advisory Committees do not take interest in their work, which is due to apathy. It is not the case at all that the advice of the Advisory Committees is never listened to. I entirely

agree with some of their proposals. The Collector generally does all the work in connection with the Advisory Committees.

"In Thana there were 9 shops. I stopped five on the recommendation of the Committee. Advisory Committees do good work in some cases.

"I have no objection to giving effect to the recommendations of the Advisory Committees."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"From my experience I find that people take very little interest in local matters even in things which concern them such as the management of their own money invested in co-operative credit societies and I do not think that they will take any interest in local option.

"Minority of drunkards is likely to be overwhelmed by those who do not drink. To reduce the number of shops is a fair proposal. Four shops for a town having a population of 45,000 is not a large number."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Shops have already been reduced and there is no scope for further reduction. British policy will be adopted by Indian States if it will not affect their State revenue. I requested State authorities to close one or two liquor shops as there were 4 quite close together at Mahalingapur, Rabhani and Terdal, but they objected.

"Rationing has just been started. It has not yet taken root. Shop-keepers only sell their own liquor and not illicit liquor.

"*Bhang* and *ganja* are more harmful than liquor. If Government will declare the policy of total prohibition, all communities will not co-operate with them. If additional police are quartered on the villages to detect illicit distillation and smuggling, it is possible to effect total prohibition ; but in that case, if the cost will be borne by villagers, I have no objection, but the cost would be prohibitive.

"Men and women earn Rs. 45 per month in Thana. I cannot tell what one man spends for his drink. Abkari revenue in Thana is Rs. 34 lakhs roughly. I think liquor (quantity) might be reduced by 20 per cent. but this is only an arbitrary figure, perhaps illicit liquor would replace the reduction of licit liquor before that figure has reached. Murders, dacoities and violent crimes are not concerned with drink, but women, money or land."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"By social pressure the consumption of drink can be reduced. Various castes have already got their organisations. They can bring their own pressure. Social ostracism is the only way.

"Sonars in Kanara District are addicted to drinking. There are others also, *viz.*, Marathas, Musalmans, Gaud Saraswats and Brahmins. Gaud Saraswats are not considered as Brahmins by other Brahmins, because they eat fish.

"I like fresh toddy. The bulk of the people drink toddy which is fermented. If you want to raise additional revenue, I think stamp revenue might be increased. It is a milch cow."

To Dr. Patil :—"Eighteen is the age when a man generally starts hard work, and I think this should be the age limit.

"Liquor coming to India is matured.

"I cannot tell what liquids are mixed in brandy and whisky. I am not a chemist.

"Raw spirits are not put on the market. Only blended liquor is kept in the market for sale.

"Government would co-operate in reducing the supply, but it will practically have no effect on drinking habits if the demand is not reduced."

*Statement produced by Mr. MacGregor showing the population of Belgaum District, by Talukas and Indian States.*

| | Talukas. | Population according to the Census of 1911. | 1921. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Belgaum Taluka .. .. .. .. | 105,515 | 112,393 |
| 2. | Chandgad Petha .. .. .. .. | 31,362 | 31,068 |
| 3. | Parasgad Taluka .. .. .. .. | 57,398 | 58,314 |
| 4. | Murgod Petha .. .. .. .. | 44,799 | 41,952 |
| 5. | Sampgaon Taluka .. .. .. .. | 117,966 | 112,901 |
| 6. | Athni Taluka .. .. .. | 123,337 | 124,678 |
| 7. | Khanapur Taluka .. .. .. .. | 72,304 | 70,592 |
| 8. | Chikodi Taluka .. .. .. .. | 157,853 | 163,683 |
| 9. | Gokak Taluka .. .. .. .. | 123,225 | 128,735 |
| 10. | Hukeri Taluka .. .. .. .. | 110,061 | 108,680 |

Indian States attached to Belgaum District for Excise Administration.

| | | Population according to the Census of 1911. | 1921. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Sangli .. .. .. (Shahapur and Terdal) | 65,444 | 63,136 |
| 2. | Jamkhandi .. .. .. .. (Jamkhandi and Bidri) | 96,483 | 75,272 |
| 3. | Kurundwad Senior .. .. .. .. (Angol and Kurundwad) | 13,341 | 22,821 |
| 4. | Kurunwad Junior .. .. (Yellur) | 17,857 | 34,288 |
| 5. | Ramdurg .. .. .. .. | 13,457 | 34,007 |
| 6. | Mudhol .. .. .. .. | 62,831 | 60,141 |

Population in the towns of over 10,000 population.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Belgaum City and Camp .. .. .. | 42,623 | 43,685 |
| 2. | Athni .. .. .. .. | 13,849 | 10,550 |
| 3. | Nipani .. .. .. .. | 10,779 | 11,274 |

*Statement produced by Mr. MacGregor showing consumption of country liquor, ganja and opium in the Belgaum District, including Indian States.*

| Area. | 1911-12. | | 1912-13. | | 1913-14. | | 1914-15. | | 1915-16. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| *Country liquor.* | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. |
| Belgaum District .. | 109,889 | .... | 117,347 | .... | 116,832 | .... | 79,427 | 4,167 | 73,479 | 5,861 |
| Native States .. .. | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | 13,950 | 4,693 | 13,333 | 4,788 |
| Total .. | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | 93,377 | 8,860 | 86,812 | 10,649 |
| *Toddy Consumption.* | | | | | | | | | | |
| Belgaum District .. | Information not available. | | .... | .... | 458,367 | .... | 449,641 | .... | 577,886 | .... |
| Native States .. .. | | | .... | .... | 120,045 | .... | 104,280 | .... | 118,874 | .... |
| Total .. | .... | .... | .... | .... | 578,412 | .... | 553,921 | .... | 696,760 | .... |
| *Ganja.* | | | M. S. T. | | M. S. T. | | M. S. T. | | M. S. T. | |
| Belgaum District .. | Information not available | | 59 28 28 | .... | 58 19 44 | .... | 49 25 77 | .... | 52 32 72 | .... |
| Native States .. .. | | | 29 9 15 | .... | 28 7 25 | .... | 28 7 25 | .... | 25 22 45 | .... |
| Total .. | .... | .... | 88 37 43 | .... | 86 26 69 | .... | 77 33 22 | .... | 78 15 37 | .... |
| *Opium.* | | | | | Seers T. G. | | Seers T. G. | | Seers T. G. | |
| Belgaum District .. | Information not available. | | .... | .... | 7 30 39 | .... | 7 24 28 | .... | 311 41 45 | .... |

| Area. | 1916-17. | | 1917-18. | | 1918-19. | | 1919-20. | | 1920-21. | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 30 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 30 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 30 U. P. | 60 U. P. | 30 U. P. | 60 U. P. | |
| | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| *Country liquor.* | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | |
| Belgaum District .. | 85,814 | 7,259 | 78,343 | 29,650 | 73,792 | 50,977 | 78,366 | 50,426 | 69,312 | 44,679 | Separate figures for Native States shops are not available for the first three years. |
| Native States .. | 14,892 | 5,412 | 16,796 | 5,752 | 15,025 | 10,185 | 13,398 | 10,431 | 11,550 | 9,242 | |
| Total .. | 100,706 | 12,671 | 95,139 | 35,402 | 88,817 | 61,162 | 91,764 | 60,857 | 80,862 | 53,921 | |
| *Toddy Consumption.* | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Belgaum District .. | 495,323 | .... | 374,664 | .... | 703,565 | .... | 764,977 | .... | 565,957 | .... | Figures given in gallons. |
| Native States .. | 114,937 | .... | 203,496 | .... | 145,249 | .... | 159,012 | .... | 162,307 | .... | |
| Total .. | 610,264 | .... | 579,160 | .... | 848,814 | .... | 923,989 | .... | 728,264 | .... | |
| *Ganja.* | M. S. T. | | M. S. T. | | M. S. T. | | M. S. T. | | M. S. T. | | |
| Belgaum District .. | 52 32 72 | .... | 47 22 48 | .... | 49 34 31 | .... | 43 11 76 | .... | 36 6 56 | .... | |
| Native States .. | 25 22 45 | .... | 22 10 52 | .... | 27 20 59 | .... | 32 39 4½ | .... | 24 13 7 | .... | |
| Total .. | 78 15 37 | .... | 69 33 21 | .... | 77 15 10 | .... | 76 11 ½ | .... | 60 19 63 | .... | |
| *Opium.* | S. T. G. | | S. T. G. | | S. T. G. | | S. T. G. | | S. T. G. | | |
| Belgaum District .. | 30 20 8½ | .... | 351 8 178 | .... | 435 3 67½ | .... | 349 70 45 | .... | 453 44 67½ | .... | |

*Statement produced by Mr. MacGregor showing the cases of smuggling and illicit distillation in the Belgaum District.*

| Year. | Illicit distillation and possession of implements, etc., for the same. | Illicit importation, exportation and transportation. | Illicit importation, exportation or transportation. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 16 | 23 | 2 | *Note.*—Figures in columns 2 and 3 show offences relating to liquor and those in column 4 to Ganja (Hemp drugs). |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 13 | 20 | 1 | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 4 | 29 | .... | |

No. 31.

REPLIES OF RAO BAHADUR VENKATESH SHRINIWAS NAIK, PRESIDENT, RANEBENNUR MUNICIPALITY.

1. I am landholder and savkar by profession. I have been the President of the Ranebennur Municipality continuously for the last 13 years and have been connected with the taluka local board and district local board for about the last 25 years, as Vice-President for about 20 years, and President for the last three years of the former body and a member of the latter for about 15 years prior to 1919, and thus have had occasions to come in contact with people of various callings and avocations. I was also a member of the Legislative Council for eight years (1913 to 1921) and thus have come in contact with both Government and the public in various capacities.

2 and 3. The policy of Government in the matter of administering the Excise Department as enunciated in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001 of 7th September 1905 is no doubt a commendable one. In inaugurating this policy Government no doubt must have realised that the effect of alcohol upon the human body is disastrous and leaves no doubt in the minds of the candid that there is little excuse for its internal use. Government must also have seen that there are things in connection with the use of alcohol that go to show that it is one of the greatest curses of mankind. Still in the policy declared Government say that they do not interfere in the case of those whose habits are the use of alcohol in moderation. They further say that their settled policy is to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess amongst those who do and to the furtherence of this policy all considerations of revenue must be subordinated. In spite of Government following this policy for the last 17 years the actual results are not as encouraging as it was expected. Although Government have lowered the percentage of alcohol in intoxicating beverages and have increased considerably the still-head duty as well as the fees for holding a particular shop, the drink habit amongst the masses has not considerably been diminished. It is, therefore, the duty both of Government and the educated and fars-ighted man of the country to espouse the cause of prohibition and complete abstinence from drinking. Although it is not possible to effect a complete change a rather rapid and effective move in this direction is essentially necessary. The mass education should be considerably increased bringing home the evil effects of the drink habit and the economic loss it causes to the community and individuals. The facilities for obtaining liquor should be considerably reduced by curtailing the hours during which liquor could be bought and locating the shops at such inconvenient and distant places as not to induce a man to easily go to them. The present policy of making the price of country liquor prohibitive and reducing the strength of the liquor without at the same time keeping a check over the importation and sale of cheap foreign liquor will not only drive the people addicted to the drink habit to have recourse to more costly things and thus drive them into a more impoverished state of life.

4. Certainly, I am in favour of total prohibition.

My reasons for advocating complete prohibition are briefly these :—

(1) The drink habit drives people, particularly illiterate and poor masses, to poverty, shame, degradation, wretchedness and what not.

(2) It causes diseases and brings infirmity to many families.

(3) A limited amount of alcohol may undergo combustion in and give energy to the system but the habit of its use, particularly amongst the illiterate, cannot make them remain under control and moderation and is sure to drive many poor families, particularly of working classes, to ruin, and stories of woe in their families due to intemperate drink habits have filled in and are daily filling in volumes.

(4) In spite of all these men continue to drink; liquor probably will do so as long as it is made easily available.

Although ostensibly complete prohibition does not look as a practical measure, yet if the State, country and the people seriously wish and try to put a stop to the liquor traffic the desired object could be achieved. It may take scores of years for the prohibition movement to gain support but if people and Government seriously take into their heads to eradicate this drink curse from this country and if men of all classes, industrialists, commercialists, theologians, ethicists, moralists, men of science and socialogists worked side by side with the one object of completely stopping this evil curse, giving their best to bring about the desired end, the victory over this enemy which has taken so deep a root amongst the people of this country can be surely won.

5. (*a*) The Excise Department should be more vigilent and stop the illicit manufacture of liquor from various trees and other sources. Mass education is another of the most effective remedy which could arrest this mischief.

(*b*) In the beginning for a few years there will be difficulty in checking the illicit importation from Indian States and Portugese territory and the staff of the Excise Department should be more diligent in bringing such cases to light ; but if the prohibition movement gains ground and the economic state of the people will improve, which it is certain to do, it will certainly be a most effective eye-opener to the people in these States and the morale of the whole humanity in this country will improve.

The good results that are sure to be reaped by adopting prohibition measures and the improvement in the general state of the masses are sure to create an awakening in the Indian States and Portugese territories and these Provinces are sure to follow suit by banning liquor.

(*c*) Mass education and the adoption of methods to bring home to the masses themselves the knowledge that the use of alcohol lowers their efficiency, breeds crime and destroys home and wealth and a moral crusade against alcoholism are sure, after some time, to correct the customs and habits of certain classes of the people in this Presidency who now think that the use of alcohol as a beverage is very ancient and is allowed to them by their religion.

(*d*) Of course, preventive establishments are necessary and, looking to the beneficial effects and the ultimate result the measures are going to bring upon the masses, it is worth the trouble and money that will be spent for maintaining such an establishment. Diligent supervision would certainly be necessary as in every other department of prevention of crimes and maintaining law and order.

(*e*) The educative effect upon the masses suggested in reply to (*c*) above are the remedies for the evil anticipated in this question. The same amount of restrictions and inconvenience that is now proposed in making liquor available to the masses if exercised in the case of these drugs, the mischief anticipated will be greatly checked if not completely stopped.

6. I am one who believes that complete prohibition is not possible at once. If the State and the country move in the direction of enforcing complete prohibition seriously, it will have the desired complete effect in the next generation and the Government and the people then will not have much to do in the matter and, on the other hand, thank us for the good and desirable results which our actions and efforts will bring about. In America the States ran dry after persistent efforts for more than eighty years.

7. Although prohibitive legislation is one of the most important measures for complete prohibition I do not think that it will of itself bring about the desired result. Mass education to bring home the bad and uneconomic effects of drinking and causing great inconvenience to the topers in obtaining liquor in the preliminary stages are necessary before prohibition legislation is undertaken.

8. In the first instance I would suggest that the principle of prohibition should be applied to distilled liquors and gradually it should be extended to fermented ones. Some people hold that sweet toddy before it is fermented is a food and has medicinal value while others as famous claim that toddy is not a food. To laymen this will look confounding but this discrepancy comes from some men looking as food as one thing while others call food some thing else. But all agree that toddy does not go to form bone, muscles, fat, etc., which a food must do in the broader sense of the term. I treat unfermented toddy as a mild or rather innocent beverage. I would therefore not prohibit the use of unfermented or sweet toddy.

9 and 10. Although I do not think that absolute prohibition is not impossible I think it would be pretty long before the country would go dry. Some drastic measures to reduce the consumption of liquor are essentially necessary and should be taken both by Government and the masses. I would welcome the means suggested in question no. 10 and would add that the days and hours of sale should be so arranged and controlled that the labouring classes will not get liquor when they are off duty. The liquor-shops particularly in areas where the labouring classes live should be so located that the labourers and poor people will not easily get to them without very great inconvenience.

11. Certainly in advanced places and big towns, say, with a population of 25,000 and above, the principles of local option should be introduced and such option should be exercised by the public through local bodies like the municipalities and recognised communal *panchayats*, if they exist.

12. I would certainly favour the suggestion of investing the municipalities and taluka local boards with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. Regarding the district local boards I think as they are now constituted the area is rather too big and the rural representation upon them is limited to one member for each taluka who cannot be expected to know all about the conditions of the taluka from which he comes and represent the same to the central body, I mean, the district local board in this matter. I do not think that the local body should at all be held responsible for raising any revenue out of these shops.

13. The advisory committees, wherever they have been formed, I believe have done good and useful work in the matter of checking the drinking habits of the people but their number is very small. I suggest that there should be at least one such committee in each municipality and taluka if not more. The advice given by these bodies should be more effectively heard and given effect to.

14. Certainly the evils of drink constitute considerably to an increase in crime. Stories and occurrences of heinous crimes and even murder due to these drink habits are too numerous to need any particular and special mention. In a few cases this drink habit has no doubt an effect upon the output of work but the pernicious effect it leaves upon the constitution of the person outweighs the extra output of work and I do not think that this increase in the outturn of work through the drink habit should in the least be encouraged.

15. It is true the result of the recommendations I have made will go to reduce the excise revenue in the beginning and gradually result in its extinction. The revenue from Excise is in this Presidency from three to four crores of rupees. The loss of such a big revenue is one of the strongest arguments that will be advanced against the advocacy of the policy of abstinence. It should be realised that being freed from the curse of drink the capacity of the people to bear taxation would increase as would also their purchasing power so that revenue from other departments would expand and set off the loss of Excise revenue.

16. The use of opium, hemp, and other intoxicating drugs is also as pernicious as that of liquor and their sale and availability should also be restricted; except in the case of their use as medicinal drugs.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is more rampant amongst the labouring classes who go out for work, such as millhands, coolies, etc. They administer small doses of opium to their children to act as a sedative and induce sleep. This custom, no doubt, must be having a very bad effect upon the health of the children and must be considerably contributing towards the very high death rate amongst the infants.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Rao Bahadur VENKATESH NAIK replied to the President :—" Ranebennur, Byadgi and Hirekerur have a population of 14,000, 6,000 and 4,000 respectively. There is one shop in each town. The decrease in drink in each of the abovementioned towns is due to economic causes. People have become poorer on account of the high cost of living. They are all agricultural talukas. They produce jowar and cotton. No doubt, they get higher price for the crops they produce than what they used to get before on account of the present high prices, but living in general has considerably increased. Labouring classes and weavers drink. Weavers do carry on their trade. Well-to-do men keep looms. Weavers (labourers) depend upon rich people and get work from them on the piece-work system. Now-a-days living has become very dear and naturally these people spend less on drink and that is the reason why there is decrease in drink. The consumption of toddy is tending to increase, because toddy is very cheap. They have recourse to toddy as it is a comparatively cheap beverage. Local people do consume liquor to a certain extent. People from surrounding places come to Ranebennur for bazar and they also drink. The large sale of toddy depends upon the energy of the contractor. The reduction in the sale of toddy in the case of Hirekerur is due to the poverty of the people. The present poor condition of Hirekerur people is due to bad seasons. There was a remarkable drop in the crop due to bad seasons, which accounts for the heavy decrease in drink. There is rice plantation in Hirekerur. There is no transplantation there. In Hirekerur people do not require any drink even though they will have to work in water.

" The illiterate cannot maintain self-control and moderation and the habit of drink is sure to drive many poor families, particularly of the working classes, to ruin. The literate withstand the temptation. Generally they will not go in for drink. Of course there may be exceptions.

" In the Kod Taluka illicit distillation is rampant. They utilize *bylad chakki* (arsenic variety), bark of a tree, for illicit distillation. Lamanis and Wadars, and people who go from place to place and are itinerant classes, distil illicit liquor. In the Ranebennur Taluka it exists to a certain extent, but not so much as in the Kod Taluka.

" I am not in favour of prohibition by legislation immediately. The masses should be prepared to receive it. By educating the masses the generation which is to come will not be addicted to drink. By educative propaganda, the masses must be made to understand the evil effects of drink. Unless that impression is brought home to the masses, to legislate on the question of total prohibition will be a mistake. Drinking classes will not resent total prohibition. Some of the drinking classes of the present generation will try to find out other means for the supply of liquor. In the Dharwar District there is a possibility of illicit distillation to some

extent. There is no prohibitive legislation in the Mysore State, and Hirekerur and other bordering talukas might get their supply through that State. There is legislation in connection with smoking, which is now practically dormant.

" Toddy and shindi tappers are in abundance. Toddy and shindi are one and the same. You can make no difference in them. The whole thing is called toddy (*eachla*) in the town. In the Mysore State, Madras Presidency and Konkan talukas toddy is extracted from cocoanut trees also.

" Having been completely satisfied by the explanation given by the President of the utility of local option, I think, there will be no harm to give effect to the local option. I have also no objection to the right of vote being given to women.

" I have no data as regards murders. Three causes, *viz.* : property, women and drink are generally at the root of crimes and murders.

" I think cinemas should be taxed and death duties should also be increased. I would favour succession duty if lawyers will decide the technical points in connection with undivided families."

To Mr. Madon :—" I suggest a tax on looms, etc., it is not possible to tax labourers. I suggest also import duties into towns. On its being represented that those who never drink, will have to bear to a large extent the taxes to be imposed on account of total prohibition, which is for the benefit of the lower classes soaked in drink, I think, the Committee, as well as myself, find it very difficult to have a tax which will only affect those who are in the habit of drinking. However, I think food-stuffs and clothing should be taxed. In connection with the rental value of land, I think, it has increased to a certain extent, but the expenditure has also grown with the income. I do not think that there should be any tax on Inamdars. Advisory committees have done good work in Dharwar and Hubli. Their advice is not much heeded. "

To the Reverend Mr. Macnicol :—" It is not possible to state how many shops there are in each taluka. Probably 10 or 12. In small talukas there may be one each."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" Harali grows when the land is not attended to. It is required to be removed. Its effect is very bad. It decreases the value of the land by 50 per cent. or even more. Harali does not allow any crop to grow. The Agricultural Department has got the means to remove Harali, which are very costly. The cost of removing Harali by hand digging is about 80 rupees per acre. No doubt we will have to levy taxes. Ranebennur and Dharwar are famous for murders. Sometimes a drunkard loses his temper and commits a murder.

"Disciples must be most obedient to have effect on them of their religious preachers in connection with drink. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" There should be co-operation between Government and the public in carrying on the educative propaganda to root out this evil. Lessons in books, should be introduced to show the bad effects of drinking, and if that advice is ingrained in the minds of children there will be less chances of their being drunkards in their future life. Legislative enactment alone will not be sufficient. For curtailing the consumption of liquor I think the rationing system is very good. There are also other methods. Keep liquor-shops as distant as possible from each other and shut up shops after five in the evening. I prefer the ' on ' shop-system. By a vigilant watch quarrels and affrays may be put a stop to by the police. I wish that liquor-shops should be in out-of-the-way places. There are many places in my district where illicit distillation is going on. If total prohibition is introduced, illicit distillation will have to be vigilently watched.

"Within a decade total prohibition should be brought into effect. There is no objection to increasing vernacular schools. Prohibition should also be attended to side by side with education. No doubt education too is more urgently necessary. The Excise policy of Government will never succeed unless the country—the masses—co-operate with them.

" I would prefer direct vote.

" There are 45 per cent. Lingayats in my district. Crimes amongst them are committed according to their numerical proportion. The criminality in this class is not due only to drink, but it is accelerated by it. Crimes eventually take place in a weak state of mind."

To Dr. Patil :—" Only foreign liquor is restricted. In the mofussil liquor is sold in bottles. There is no restriction as to quantity.

"They adulterate toddy with water. Some opium and other stupifying drugs are also added to bring about an exhilarating effect. These are deleterious.

"I would not prohibit unfermented and unadulterated toddy being used.

"I think the present age limit of 16 should be extended to 21."

*Statement produced by Rao Bahadur V. S. Naik, showing the consumption of country liquor and toddy in the district of Dharwar.*

| Year. | Country spirit gallons. | | | Toddy gallons. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 25 u. p. | 30 u. p. | 60 u. p. | | |
| 1907-08 .. .. | 93,942 | .. | .. | 4,44,731 | |
| 1908-09 .. .. | 1,13,609 | .. | .. | 5,15,592 | |
| 1909-10 .. .. | * | * | * | 4,71,949 | * Not available. |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 1,57,792 | .. | .. | 5,55,958 | |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 1,76,651 | .. | .. | 6,00,382 | Population as per |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 1,54,621 | .. | .. | 5,48,934 | 1911 Census, |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 1,75,729 | .. | .. | 7,48,896 | 1,026,005. |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 1,44,005 | .. | 1,026 | 7,47,183 | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 1,38,589 | .. | 4,127 | 7,89,938 | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 1,47,232 | .. | 4,484 | 7,76,761 | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | .. | 1,23,887 | 21,475 | 7,94,178 | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .. | 78,733 | 44,516 | 8,34,871 | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .. | 73,441 | 38,718 | 7,56,383 | Population as per |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .. | 69,765 | 37,563 | 7,79,412 | 1921 Census, |
| | | | | | 1,036,924. |

*Statistics produced by Rao Bahadur V. S. Naik, regarding the sale of toddy for ten years at the big towns in the Ranebennur Circle (as supplied by the District Inspector of Excise for Kod and Ranebennur Talukas).*

| Serial No. | Name of the shop Big town. | 1913-14. | 1914-15. | 1915-16. | 1916-17. | 1917-18. | 1918-19. | 1919-20. | 1920-21. | 1921-32. 9-month. | 1922-23. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. |
| 1 | Ranebennur .. | 26,164 0 | 21,011 0 | 18,723 0 | 17,350 0 | 21,755 0 | 21,872 0 | 23,918 0 | 20,611 0 | 4,571 0 | .. |
| 2 | Byadgi .. | 12,756 0 | 16,380 0 | 13,848 0 | 13,741 0 | 19,512 0 | 18,529 0 | 17,900 0 | 18,000 0 | 9,551 0 | .. |
| 3 | Hirekerur .. | 9,454 0 | 8,303 0 | 10,825 0 | 7,325 0 | 9,681 0 | 4,402 0 | 4,979 0 | 3,670 0 | 1,866 0 | .. |

*Statistics produced by Rao Bahadur V. S. Naik, showing the consumption of country liquor (as supplied by the District Inspector of Excise).*

| Serial No. | Name of the shop Big town. | 1912-13. | 1913-14. | 1914-15. | 1915-16. | 1916-17. | 1917-18. | 1918-19. | 1919-20. | 1920-21. | 1921-22. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. | Gall. Dr. |
| 1 | Ranebennur .. | 5,166 27 | 5,738 38 | 4,262 15 | 4,167 33 | 4,442 18 | 4,700 45 | 3,611 0 | 2,591 16 | 2,568 22 | 2,918 15 |
| 2 | Byadgi .. | 3,384 37 | 3,543 18 | 3,264 5 | 3,840 26 | 4,172 31 | 3,837 24 | 2,446 10 | 2,244 3 | 1,736 37 | 1,586 16 |
| 3 | Hirekerur .. | 1,421 15 | 1,537 23 | 1,122 11 | 1,395 40 | 1,131 8 | 1,062 36 | 738 16 | 550 40 | 622 32 | 850 36 |

NOTE :—Ranebennur, Byadgi and Hirekerur have only one shop each. These places have a population of about 14,000, 6,000 and 4,000, respectively. The population of the Ranebennur and Kod Talukas was 96,441 and 96,345 respectively according to the Census of 1911 and 97,648 and 83,191 respectively according to that of 1921.

No. 32.

REPLIES OF RAO BAHADUR RANGO GOVIND NAIK, M. B. E., PLEADER, BELGAUM.

1. I am a High Court Pleader by profession. I had opportunities of forming my opinion on the questions in my capacity of district and divisional honorary organisor of co-operative societies, in my capacity of a practicing lawyer, in my capacity of a municipal councillor, a local board member, member of the Recruiting Board and President of the Depressed Classes Mission, etc., etc.

2. (*a*) The Excise policy of Government has not in any way checked the drink evil in the country.

(*b*) The actual results of the policy have been most discouraging. The temptation to drink has not been minimised. It has increased. With high tax on liquor the evil is still increasing. Shops are seen located in centres where people could easily be tempted to take to the evil. Strong protests against the location of such shops have not received due consideration.

3. I would suggest that there should be a radical change in the policy. Instead of the present policy, the policy should be one whose aim should be that of total eradication of the drink evil from the country. The improvements suggested would be found in the following answers.

4. I am undoubtedly in favour of total prohibition, except for medical purposes. My reasons are the evils of drink which I see daily around me. I do not think this would be a practical measure at the outset. I would suggest prohibition by successive stages. Simultaneous reduction of liquor-shops and the removal of those left to places away from human habitation so as to make them difficult of approach for ordinary drinkers should be the first step in the direction and wholesale abolition of shops should be the next step.

5. (*a*) By detecting illicit manufacture and punishing the offenders as is done now.

(*b*) The proximity of Indian States should not come in the way of total or partial prohibition. The Indian States would be too willing to adopt and encourage all salutary measures adopted by the British Government. In fact they invariably copy the policy of the British Government in all their administrative matters. The Portuguese territory extends only over a small strip of land bordering on the Belgaum and Karwar districts in British India. Importation of liquor into British territory could be prohibited and prevented by special guards placed at important places of entrance and by exemplary punishment in cases of those infringing the prohibition. If there be one policy for the whole of India, neighbouring British districts also would only bless Government for this policy and would not come in the way of the policy adopted.

(*c*) The customs and habits of the people are matters of recent growth and it would be ridiculous to say that there would be serious discontent if such customs and habits are interfered with.

(*d*) The ordinary district police, if invested with this kind of work, could detect illicit distillation and there should be no necessity for maintaining a large preventive establishment. The temptations to levy illegal exactions would certainly be there, as they are now in the Excise Administration, and they should be dealt with in the ordinary way.

(*e*) There are no such intoxicants or deleterious drugs not till now discovered by Government and not prohibited or limited for consumption by preventive laws.

6. I quite agree with the opinion.

7. Prohibitive legislation is the only method, I could advocate.

8. Yes.

9. Absolute prohibition is not feasible for the present.
*Vide* answer to question no. 4.

10. I am for (*c*) reducing the number of shops, (*b*) regulating the number of shops, (*d*) restricting the importation and sale of foreign liquor, (*e*) preserving age limit for customers of liquor, and I am for all these with a view to total prohibition in course of time.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option till the principle of total prohibition is adopted. This should be exercised through village panchayats in villages and municipalities, notified areas and sanitary committees where they exist.

12. Yes, for the first part of the question and, no, for the second part.

13. I have no experience of these committees and have heard of none.

14. Certainly.

15. I could suggest taxes on tobacco, betel-nuts, *pan* and such articles of luxury. Taxes on vehicles plying on Public Works roads and local board roads, if renewed and treated as Provincial revenue, could also be another source of revenue.

16. None.

17. I have had no experience of the custom of giving opium to young children and therefore am not in a position to give any opinion in this matter.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Rao Bahadur R. G. NAIK replied to the President :—"We have no membership for the Depressed Class Mission. Almost all of them are depressed class people addicted to drinking. Depressed classes include Mahars, Mangs, Chambhars and Dhors. My experience is not restricted to Belgaum Town only. My activities in co-operative societies extend to five districts, *viz.*, Belgaum, Dharwar, Bijapur, Karwar and Ratnagiri. Weavers, Marathas and Lamans are addicted to drinking. The Daywadna community is also addicted to drinking. Fishermen, Bhandaris, Kolis and Gawits are all addicted to drinking. I do not think it at all necessary that fishermen, who expose themselves to the inclemency of the weather by remaining in water the whole of the day, do require any drink. This is my general impression. I am 49 years old and I have about 28 years' active experience in many capacities. My own knowledge of things goes to show that drink is on the increase. My own knowledge is my own authority. My observations enable me to state that drink is on the increase. Liquor-shops should be located in out of the way places. This evil is exotic. There was one liquor-shop in Belgaum in Ganapathi Gully. The people protested and the matter was represented to the authorities. But nothing was done to remove the shop. I was never on the Advisory Committees, and I have no experience about them. There was one liquor-shop in village Bastwad in Belgaum Taluka where there was also a toddy shop. There was a co-operative society in the village. I sent the protest of the members of the society with a very strong recommendation requesting the authorities to remove that shop elsewhere about a year or two ago. But nothing to my knowledge has yet been done. It will be ridiculous to say that there will be serious discontent if such drinking customs and habits are interfered with. Prohibitive legislation is the only method I can advocate. Social *punchas* themselves are not reliable. Punchas themselves snatch away bottles from the people under them and drink themselves. This is a matter of my own knowledge. I would recommend local option as the next best. I am in favour also of direct vote. In local bodies best people are ordinarily returned and they are the most representative bodies."

In reply to a question from Mr. Madon whether he would leave it to the vote of vegetarians in any community whether meat-food was to be permitted or not, the witness said "Meat is not harmful as alcohol and this question is not likely to arise."

"The rationing system can be given a fair trial.

"There may be about 100 members in the co-operative society I referred to.

"This drink evil must go at any cost and some tax to meet the deficit will have to be levied. If liquor is stopped, people will surely take to tobacco and, if you can put higher prices on tobacco, it will bring a good deal of revenue. Every one is using tobacco.

"I would like primary education, sanitation and other things to go hand in hand with prohibition. Owing to the stoppage of liquor there will be a lot of saving in various ways. I do not think that there will be any necessity for a large preventive establishment. I would not like to postpone either primary education or total prohibition."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Stimulants should be allowed to be kept for medicinal purposes only. I will decidedly not allow punitive police for illicit distillation. Punitive police are generally put on a village for dacoities and murders, etc. I would never put drink into the category of dacoity or murder. Certainly, Indian States will follow British policy. There is a clause in all treaties with Indian States that they will follow the British policy in their administration. For instance, the British Government forced States not to grow opium and they have sacrificed that income now. The maximum period for total prohibition will be 10, 15 or 20 years. Tea also can be taxed. But as I have said in my written evidence, tea comes under luxury."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"I do not know whether illicit liquor is bad. It might contain more percentage of alcohol. The Berads and other tribes are addicted to drinking. In course of time they may become sober. Mostly it will take three months for them to leave liquor altogether. One month's abstinence—in the month of Shrawan—has no effect on them. To begin with they will be very much nervous and excited. They might even think of illicit distillation. The preventive establishment will be able to prevent illicit distillation.

"Drink has come to India with the Mahomedans. I know this from what I have read and heard.

"I have already said that prohibition and education must go hand in hand. I would attend first to the prohibition of drink. I will lay more stress on prohibition. If financial stringency

will not allow both, my suggestion for prohibition by successive stages will meet the difficulty.

"Money can be made available from land-tax, local fund cess, house-property tax for municipal as well as provincial purposes and also retrenchments here and there.

"Compulsory primary education must be made feasible. Both prohibition and education must go hand in hand.

"The Nawab of Janjira may follow the British policy."

To Dr. Patil :—"Total prohibition should come gradually. There are restrictions on foreign liquor only. I think both country and foreign liquors should have same restrictions.

"Toddy is harmful if it is taken in excess. Food-stuffs also are kept in liquor-shops.

"I would reduce the hours of sale and keep shops open from 3 to 8 p.m.

"Eighteen should be the age limit."

No. 33.

REPLIES OF MR. C. S. MARSTEN, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, DHARWAR

I give below my replies to the list of questions :—

1. I belong to the Indian Police and am a Superintendent of Police of 26 years' standing.

2. I am of opinion that the present policy of the Government of India is only sound in respect of the intelligentsia of India, but as regards the lower classes it is driving them to forego wholesome food in order to buy a drink, the price of liquor being fixed too high.

(*b*) The policy has had some effect on intemperance.

3. I would recommend a reduction of the tax on liquor. The poorer and lower classes will be driven to increased illicit distillation and, where this is impossible, to taking to intoxicating drugs which will be far more injurious to their health. A decrease in the strength of the liquor is recommended.

4. I am not in favour of total or partial prohibition. It would be impossible to enforce it in India owing to the vast jungles and areas which would have to be patrolled. The cost of the preventive establishment would be colossal, the return unsatisfactory.

5. I can say from recent experience " picketers " of liquor-shops, devout Mahomedans, who actually beat customers resorting to the liquor shop for a drink, were not averse to taking a drink themselves on the quiet. This shows that even when they had taken a pledge themselves and enforced it on others they could not adopt the principle they preached.

6. The argument that prohibition will have a large influence on the next generation, if not on this, is pure " camouflage ". I can say from personal observation that 34 years ago when I arrived in Sind Mahomedans looked on liquor as poison. Their children are now a days otherwise. And this with a very strict up-bringing and a strong religious belief to help them to abstain from liquor. The future generation, I fear, will exercise even greater liberty of action than now.

7. Complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor cannot be enforced in India by prohibitive legislation. The harshest legislation will not effectively stop the Bhils, Lamanis and other tribes from illicit distillation. The fullest preventive establishment will neither effectively stop illicit distillation owing to the vast distilling grounds in India and if the experiment is tried, it will , I fear, end in a huge loss to Government.

Drunkenness should be checked and that is all that can be done. The law should be made harsher. Time and education will wean them from this evil.

8. If prohibition is to be applied which, in my humble opinion, would be a colossal error, then under no circumstances should it be applied to toddy or shendi. This is a food for the lower classes.

9. Prosecutions for drunkenness. Home advice will eventually reduce consumption of liquor.

10. (*a*) Rationing of shops is a doubtful experiment in India. It probably will indirectly still increase the price of liquor.

(*b*) Increasing the price of liquor. The price is, in my humble opinion, too high already.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops. Only three in Dharwar Town. No further room for reduction. May be possible in large towns.

(*d*) Reducing days and hours of sale. This will only lead to disturbances.

(*e*) Reducing the strength of liquor. A sound proposition and should be adopted.

Regulating the location of shops. This should be carried out.

Restricting or prohibiting the importation and sale of foreign liquor. If by foreign liquor is meant Europe liquor and not Indian States liquor I would not restrict it as the masses do not drink it. I would restrict the latter.

(*h*) The licenses under this clause may be regulated.

(*i*). I would recommend that liquor should not be sold to customers under 17 years of age, but not toddy.

(*j*) I would not subsidise temperance associations. Honorary workers in any number will be forthcoming.

(*k*) I would not restrict the removal of liquor from shops but would encourage it to a certain extent. If restricted, drunken brawls would increase and would eventually necessitate the posting of Police at the shops.

11. I am not in favour of " local option ".

12. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops.

13. Advisory committees have been found to be useful. They may be enlarged.

14. There is no doubt that the drink evil contributes to an increase in crime.

15. I have no suggestions to make.

16. I would restrict the use of opium and altogether prohibit the use of hemp drugs.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is practically universal, but more employed amongst the lower classes.

In conclusion I would state that total prohibition even in a civilized country, to wit America, is gradually becoming a failure. To impose it in India would be a still greater failure as it will be impossible to enforce it owing to the prohibitive cost of the preventive establishment which even then will not effectively combat illicit distillation. The price of liquor is already too high. The labouring classes must have liquor. With every rise in the price of liquor there will be a corresponding rise in the demand of wages in the labour market which will seriously affect all industries. Not only this but during the height of the recent picketing of liquor shops when the customers were forcibly driven away they resorted to *ganja* smoking which was infinitely worse for them. Others took to opium. From one evil another—the lesser evil is better. The time is not yet ripe for drastic measures.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MARSTEN replied to the President :—"I was in West Khandesh for five years, in Panch Mahals and Godhra for five, and in Nasik for five years. The district of West Khandesh is well-known for heavy drinking ; specially Nawapur Taluka is very bad. The whole of Khandesh is worse for drink. Bhils in Satpuda take both licit and illicit liquor. All—men, women and children—drink there. It is a physical impossibility to put a stop to this heavy drinking. Officers cannot go into the jungles. They are not at all approachable. They are all hill tribes. If total prohibition is introduced, illicit distillation of liquor is bound to increase. You cannot keep these people away from drink. They have got all available material.

"While on duty I was once putting up in a *chawdi*. Opposite to that *chawdi* there was a liquor shop. I saw a woman purchasing a bottle of liquor and also giving it to her child. If anybody would have told me that even children are addicted to drinking, I would never have believed him. But I was an eyewitness of the incident which I have narrated above.

"Kolis and Bhils living in Baglan, Kelvan and Sutran in the District of Nasik drink on an extensive scale. Thakurs are just equally bad. They are agriculturists.

"Gujarat Bhils are well-known for their heavy drinking propensities.

"I was not in Surat. But I was in Broach. I know nothing about Surat Dangs.

"My experience of Dharwar is limited to one year only.

"Since the Excise Department has been separated, the Police have little or no concern with the detection of cases in connection with illicit distillation. In Nasik and Khandesh the returns about the cases in connection with illicit distillation are not satisfactory. No information in connection with any offence will be available unless one digs for it. If the work of finding out illicit distillation cases be transferred to the Police Department, additional establishment of Sub-Inspectors will be necessary. Though District Police by their acquaintance with the locality are in a better position to undertake the above job, still excise police, being wholly and solely devoted to that work, have their own informants. Now there are other points also. Intimate acquaintance with the people is likely to be abused by the police also. I am not in a position to say whether the Excise or the Police Department is in a better position to detect the cases of illicit distillation.

"By 'drunkenness' I mean drinking carried to an excess. I do not intend to interfere with the liberty to those who drink in moderation, but at the same time I am anxious to see that people who are drunkards should be saved from that situation. It is true that they cannot be saved by legislation.

"Drunkards lie like logs of wood on roads and jungle paths. Tigers do not touch them. While returning to my bungalow I have seen many drunkards lying drunk on the roads.

"In Akrani in West Khandesh mere preaching has worked wonders in the cause of total prohibition. By the advice of one Sadhu the people of that place, who before the arrival of that Sadhu were hard drunkards, left liquor altogether. One Sadhu carried out total prohibition there within one day which could never have been done by any other man within a hundred years. Nobody could have done that either by force or threats. Advice from right sort of leaders—not our present leaders—and preaching will undoubtedly do a lot. I was in Panch Mahals in 1907.

"Toddy and shindi are less harmful. I will allow the use of both.

"Present hours of opening and closing liquor shops should not be curtailed. Shops are closed during Mohorum and not on fairs and pilgrim days.

"Foreign and country liquors should have equal restrictions. I will prefer stopping all quality of inferior liquor and I think it will be a move in the right direction.

"I think the present age limit of 16 should be extended to 21.

"The right to vote will not be exercised by the people in an independent and free manner and if things arrived at that state I will certainly favour local option.

"The same opinion applies in the case of local bodies also.

"In Nasik and Panch Mahals I was a member of the Advisory Committee. There was no meeting of the Advisory Committee in Dharwar during the year. Advisory Committees are just like debates. If the views expressed by the Advisory Committees are sound ones, they are certainly carried out.

"Members of the Advisory Committees are appointed by the Collector of the District.

"The proposition that the decisions of the committees carried out by the majority should be binding on the Collector and that he should be compelled by the legislation to carry them out is a sound one. But the Collector should use his discretion. Advisory Committees should be extended. An Excise officer and a Prant officer should be added to them."

To Rao Saheb Desai.—"The utility of rationing shops is extremely doubtful.

"Punitive police cannot be put on villages for illicit distillation. Punitive police are generally put for lawless behaviour. No doubt illicit distillation is a serious crime but you cannot put punitive police for that.

"Before committing murders and dacoities liquor is generally taken in order to give a little courage.

"Inferior European liquor is becoming cheaper now a days. People will decidedly run for foreign liquor, if country liquor is prohibited.

"Drink has become a necessity for Sindhi labourers. The Jabhers in Upper Sind take drink after working in water the whole day. I do not know how much they spend in drink, nor also can I tell how much a labourer must have been receiving from his employer as I myself am not an employer of labourers."

To Mr. Jadhav.—"The number of crimes responsible for drink is negligible. There is a large number of murders among Lingayats on account of factions. I do not know whether they drink or not. In Dharwar Lamans are addicted to drink. In West Khandesh crimes take place in connection with women, witches and land.

"I think both 'on' and 'off' shop systems should be used."

To Dr. Patil.—"Bhil women do not drink. I do not think that drink is an unprofitable luxury. One glass of liquor does not make any harm. To stop craving for more drink depends upon your character. It depends upon nerve and will power. Mr. Morley says 'Drink is an additional plague'. I do not call it a plague and hence I do not want to adopt measures which I will have to take in the case of plague.

"Total prohibition can be effected by persuasion. Excessive drinking makes one incapable for work, but if moderately taken a man works twice as hard. You can persuade people but you cannot force them.

"Illicit distillation is going on now. If liquor shops will be closed it will be doubled or quadrupled, in fact they will get it cheaper.

"I have seen and drink toddy. I have never been inside a toddy shop. Unfermented and unadulterated toddy is not harmful.

"Cocaine is an extremely bad form of drug."

---

*Note.*—The report of his oral evidence was supplied to the witness for remarks, but none were offered by him.

# POONA WITNESSES.

## No. 34.

REPLIES OF MR. W. F. HUDSON, C.I.E., I.C.S., COLLECTOR OF POONA.

1. Indian Civil Service. Have been a district officer for over 20 years, and held charge of seven districts, including Surat, where excise policy is of more importance than any other administrative question.

2. I concur generally in the Excise policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India and think it has been quite remarkably successful.

3. I consider that it is not the duty of Government to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation: but I have no objection to the application of the principle of local option in cities.

4. No. I observe that reasons are not asked for except in the case of those who favour total prohibition, and I therefore do not submit any. They are obvious to anyone who has ever lived in Gujarat.

11. Yes. I think experiments might be tried in various cities. The conditions should be (1) the municipality should decide in favour of the experiment by a two-thirds majority, (2) the municipality should pay all the expenses of ascertaining the popular will, (3) all adult males should be allowed to vote, or if this is not feasible, then every adult male who pays any direct municipal tax, however small, (4) the question at issue should be a straight one "Do you wish all country liquor shops to be closed in this city next year".

12. Certainly not. At present there is a serious danger of local boards being captured by doctrinaire politicians, who know very little about the wishes of their constituents and nothing whatever about the problems of Excise administration.

13. Yes. Most of the members have very little knowledge of Excise difficulties, but the existence of the committee provides a useful safety-valve, and its meetings occasionally afford an opportunity for useful discussions and explanation of Excise policy. I should like to see the liquor licensees represented on the Committees, which are at present chiefly composed of temperance fanatics.

14. In areas where the lower classes habitually drink, *e.g.*, Surat, there is no doubt that the habit is responsible for a large proportion of the crimes of violence.

15. (1) An amusement tax; if people give up drink, they will unquestionably spend more money on amusements and (2) an increase in the land revenue, which is fully justified by the rise in prices.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. HUDSON replied to the President:—"I am Collector and District Magistrate, Poona, I was Collector in the District of Surat also. In Surat the depressed and lower classes are addicted to drinking. The consumption of toddy is greater there than in the Deccan. Unfermented toddy is a good food. Most people drink it after fermentation, as it has then considerable intoxicating power. There are Bhils in the Surat Dangs who do little except drink; their chief interest in life is drink. Both men and women drink.

"The drink problem is not so serious in Sind. People in the Sind mofussil hardly drink at all. I have left Sind seven years ago, and there may have been changes since then.

"In Poona City if people wish to have abolition, I should be in favour of local option. I am opposed to the indirect vote.

"Advisory Committees are not a failure in Poona. I am finding them of considerable use. Most of their resolutions are carried out. Some have been carried out in entire opposition to my views. This has been the case since the introduction of the Reforms. All non-official members of the Advisory Committee are for prohibition. They continually ask to close shops. Two liquor shops in the city, two in the Cantonment and two in the district have been closed lately. The total number before the closing of the above liquor shops was 48. In 1904 and 1905 the number of liquor shops was 68. Some way will have to be found out to represent all interested parties on the Advisory Committees by election.

"As regards making up for the loss of revenue, the land revenue should be increased. Everybody is getting more for everything except Government. We will have to increase the land revenue.

"I do not pretend to be an expert on the subject of the effect of drink on the output of work. If there is prohibition of liquor to-morrow I think the standard of a labourer's work

will deteriorate. The next generation, however, if brought up independent of liquor, will no doubt tend to increase the output.

"I do not like to offer an off-hand opinion as to whether mills, which may have a better outturn as a result of prohibition, can be taxed. I am entirely in favour of death duties, but I think there may be trouble about Hindoo joint families.

"In rural areas I am entirely opposed to any attempt to apply the principle of local option at present. I do not know how to solve the problem of illicit distillation of liquor in areas like Surat, Thana and Kaira, as large quantities of raw material are available there. If the standard of education of the people living therein is improved, it will have some effect on their habits of drinking. Their present lives are dull. They have absolutely nothing to do except drinking. Drink is the cheapest amusement. No doubt, other amusements will wean some percentage of people from drink."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"I do not want to deprive women of their right to vote so far as local option is concerned. I do not want to express any opinion about Bombay."

To Mr. Mehta :—"Under present conditions I do not want to put any restrictions on foreign liquors. I do not know whether foreign liquors are sent to this country in an immature state. I have not studied that problem.

"I never draw an imaginary line between Poona City, Cantonment and Kirkee so far as the general drink question is concerned but consider all three as one for Abkari purposes.

"I generally approve of the Abkari policy of Government. Government does not desire to interfere with the reasonable liberties of the people who wish to drink.

"I do not consider drinking as a crime."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"I am not in favour of putting deterrent punishments or punitive police on villages where illicit distillation is going on. It will, no doubt, have some effect in preventing illicit distillation but the punishment, I think, will be very stringent. The general sense of the community is, as it were, against punitive police, and such a measure would bring Government into odium. If the public is ever in favour of absolute prohibition, there will be no necessity of enforcing it by law.

"I expect that Government will co-operate with a large majority of heads and leaders of societies if they will come forward."

To Dr. Patil :—"Liquor shops are open for short hours in Poona. Liquor shops should not be in prominent places, nor should they be in absolutely out of the way places. On the whole I prefer the 'off' license to the 'on'.

"If a limited quantity of liquor is taken home I do not think that there is any special danger of women and children partaking it.

"Nine-tenths of people who drink toddy drink it fermented; it is intoxicating. I am not prepared to say—even Doctors differ—whether it is injurious or otherwise.

"We cannot subsidise temperance associations. They should support themselves.

"The inclusion of scientific temperance in school curricula is no doubt advisable.

"Age limit for the right to purchase liquor should be 16. At this age a man in this country is married and is allowed to do anything he likes. He maintains himself and takes part in national movements. So I can see no justification for treating him as a child in regard to drink."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"I am unable to suggest any agency to put a stop to drinking in rural areas. At present this problem is insoluble. There are 28 liquor shops in rural areas in the Poona District, and there is no further room left for reduction. As the rationing system has just been introduced I am not in a position to give any opinion on it for the present. Five per cent. reduction is not very serious.

"I say that the land revenue should be increased. I cannot say off-hand how and to what extent it should be done.

"I would apply the local option principle to both toddy and shindi.

"An interesting experiment was made in Poona during the last year. For eight months, owing to the picketing campaign, there was practically prohibition of country liquor, and the sales to Poona City and Cantonment and Kirkee Cantonment decreased from 13,135 gallons in April to 826 gallons in June. The total consumption for the 12 months in this area was 51,000 gallons as against 123,000 the year before, and it is interesting to note that directly picketing was stopped by magisterial order, the sales reached normal figures again within a month. It is also interesting to note that the consumption of hemp drugs increased by 40 per cent. in the same area, and that although the issue price of opium was increased from Rs. 45 to Rs. 60 per seer the sales did not decrease, as they were expected to do. The foreign liquor shops sold 12,000 dozens of spirits as against 10,000 in the previous year. All of which seems to show that if people cannot get country liquor they will endeavour to get something in its place. At the same time I agree that Poona was unusually free from drunkenness during the picketing campaign, and that it had an excellent effect on servants and sepoys."

*Statement furnished by Mr. Hudson, Collector of Poona, showing the total consumption of country spirit in terms of proof gallons in Poona City, Poona and Kirkee Cantonments, and in the Poona District (exclusive of Bhor State.)*

| Year. | Number of shops in the *whole* district (except Bhor State). | Population for the *whole* district. | Population for Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments only. | Consumption in Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments. | Rate per head of population in Poona City and Cantonments. | Consumption in the district, i.e., the MOFUSSIL only. | Consumption for the WHOLE of the district. *Total of cols. 4a and 5.* | Rate per head of population in Poona District. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4a | 4b | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | | | | Gallons (Proof). | Drams. | | | Drams. | |
| 1904-05 .. | 68 | 995,330 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 147,539 | 7·1 | |
| 1905-06 .. | 67 | 995,330 | 153,320 | 100,064 | 31·3 | 20,156 | 120,220 | 5·8 | |
| 1906-07 .. | 66 | 995,330 | 153,320 | 105,671 | 33·1 | 23,794 | 129,465 | 6·3 | |
| 1907-08 .. | 66 | 995,330 | 153,320 | 112,171 | 35·1 | 29,098 | 141,269 | 6·8 | |
| 1908-09 .. | *62 | 995,330 | 153,330 | 92,659 | 29·01 | 22,468 | 115,127 | 5·6 | *Exclusive of 2 shops under departmental arrangement. |
| 1909-10 .. | 52 | 995,330 | 153,330 | 87,966 | 27·5 | 27,475 | 115,441 | 5·6 | |
| 1910-11 .. | 50 | 995,330 | 153,330 | 97,265 | 30·5 | 26,467 | 123,732 | 5·5 | |
| 1911-12 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 101,537 | 30·7 | 30,402 | 131,939 | 5·9 | |
| 1912-13 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 91,613 | 27·7 | 31,054 | 122,667 | 5·5 | |
| 1913-14 .... | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | .. | .. | .. | 132,620 | 5·6 | |
| 1914-15 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 93,805 | 28·4 | 32,320 | 126,185 | 5·6 | |
| 1915-16 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 101,290 | 30·6 | 19,895 | 121,185 | 5·5 | |
| 1916-17 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 116,553 | 35·2 | 34,222 | 150,775 | 6·7 | |
| 1917-18 .. | †48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 134,599 | 40·7 | 38,242 | 172,841 | 7·7 | †Exclusive of 1 temporary. |
| 1918-19 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 133,461 | 35·0 | 29,048 | 162,509 | 7·2 | |
| 1919-20 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 120,203 | 31·5 | 27,457 | 147,660 | 6·6 | |
| 1920-21 .. | 48 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 123,022 | 20·6 | 17,960 | 140,982 | 6·3 | |
| 1921-22 .. | 42 | 1,009,033 | 200,696 | 51,022 | 12·2 | 22,087 | 73,109 | 3·5 | |

*Statement furnished by Mr. Hudson, Collector of Poona, showing the total consumption of toddy in the Poona City, Poona and Kirkee Cantonments and in the Poona District (exclusive of Bhor State) for 8 years from 1914-15 to 1921-22.*

| Year. | Number of shops in the whole District (except Bhor.) | Number of booths in the whole District (except Bhor). | Population for the whole District. | Population for Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments only. | Consumption in Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments only. | Rate per head of population, in Poona City and Cantonments. | Consumption in the District, *i.e.*, the mofussil only (excluding Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments.) | Consumption for the whole District, *i.e.*, of columns 6 and 8 | Rate per head of population in Poona District. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | | | | | Gallons | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | |
| 1914-15 .. | 30 | 29 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 380,200 | 2·4 | 63,608 | 443,808 | ·41 | |
| 1915-16 .. | 28 | 28 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 340,450 | 2·1 | 76,475 | 417,015 | ·38 | |
| 1916-17 | 29 | 40 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 375,052 | 2·4 | 57,027 | 432,079 | ·4 | |
| 1917-18 .. | 29 | 46 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 440,050 | 2·8 | 62,448 | 502,498 | ·46 | |
| 1918-19 .. | 29 | 27 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 511,208 | 3·2 | 94,603 | 605,811 | ·56 | |
| 1919-20 .. | 29 | 26 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 506,122 | 3·2 | 79,124 | 585,246 | ·54 | |
| 1920-21 .. | 29 | 27 | 1,071,512 | 158,856 | 590,105 | 3·7 | 57,738 | 647,843 | ·64 | |
| 1921-22 .. | 27 | 41 | 1,009,033 | 200,696 | 164,240 | 0·8 | 97,819 | 262,059 | ·26 | |

No. 35.

REPLIES OF MR. R. G. PRADHAN, B.A., LL.B., M.R.A.S., PLEADER, HIGH COURT, NASIK.

1. I am a Pleader of the High Court practising at Nasik. Until about two years ago, I used to edit a Marathi magazine called the "Bharata-sevaka" which dealt with political, social and other questions of national importance. As a publicist and journalist, I have taken considerable interest in the problem of drink, and carefully followed the national movement for mitigating and removing the drink evil. I was a member of the Advisory Committee at Nasik for one year, representing the Nasik Municipality. I have also led the anti-drink campaign at Nasik, and in my capacity as Secretary of the Anti-drink League organized last year, had many opportunities of studying, at close quarters, the actual working of the Excise administration and of ascertaining the trend of public opinion, not only among the higher but among the lower castes, regarding the drink evil and the manner of removing it.

2. The Excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, is all right, *so far as it goes*. But it does not go far enough, particularly having regard to existing circumstances and the growth of public opinion on the subject. Nor is it calculated to achieve the object it avowedly seeks to realize. Even as it is, it is positively open to objection in one important particular; and in another it calls for radical modification, in view of the constitutional progress India has made since its adoption.

The Government of India state in their letter that it is necessary to make due provision for the needs of those who use alcohol in moderation. I condemn this principle and maintain that it is no part of the duty of Government to make provision for the needs of such persons. Even though Government may not interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation, it is far from their duty to see to it that the needs of such persons are satisfied. That Government must provide facilities for drinking to those who are only moderate drinkers is a conception which goes beyond the legitimate sphere of their functions and duties. And if the matter is closely analysed, it will be found that such a conception of the duty of Government is inconsistent with the fulfilment of the other part of their policy, *namely*, to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and discourage excess among those who do. If you think that it is your duty to provide for the needs of moderate drinkers, you cannot at the same time, succed in adequately minimising temptation to those who do not drink, and discouraging excess among those who do. Let me illustrate this by a concrete example. Suppose that in a particular locality, a small minority consists of moderate drinkers, another minority of those who are given to excessive drinking, and the rest of the people are teetotallers. According to the principle laid down by Government, in order to provide for the needs of those who come under the first category, a liquor shop will have to be maintained in that locality. Now, will not the existence of the shop be a standing temptation to those who do not drink? And as regards those who are addicted to excessive drinking, it is hopeless to expect that so long as drink is within their reach, they will abstain from drinking to their heart's content, even though the price of liquor is considerably heavy. These phases of the policy of Government are, in my judgment, so inconsistent that in the very nature of things, it is impossible to reconcile them. A policy framed on the principle that provision must be made for satisfying the needs of moderate drinkers must of necessity result in putting temptation in the way of those who do not drink. In some cases, *it* will also have the effect of promoting excess among those who drink.

My view is that, taking the limitations of the policy as they are, the right course would be to aim at removing temptation to those who do not drink and putting down excess among those who do, irrespective of the consideration whether the needs of moderate drinkers are satisfied or not. In other words, as there is no such positive duty on the part of Government as that of providing for the needs of those who use alcohol in moderation, that consideration ought not, in the least, influence the policy of Government. The danger of allowing that consideration to enter into the policy of Government is that, it being reconcilable with the legitimate interests of those who do not drink and with the larger and more important interests of the community as a whole, the latter are apt to be sacrificed for the supposed rights or interests of the moderately drinking minority. The sound policy, apart from prohibition, would be to seek to check intemperance, even though thereby the moderate drinker would find it difficult to satisfy his craving for moderate drink.

The policy of Government referred to in the question was framed nearly seventeen years ago, when the system of Government, both national and provincial, was autocratic and when the question of establishing self-government in India was deemed outside the range of practical politics. It naturally, therefore, takes no thought of the implications of the system of partial responsible government which the reformed constitution has brought into existence. Under that constitution, Excise is a Transferred Department, that is to say, it is a Department the administration of which is to be carried on in accordance with public opinion as expressed

by the voters and through the Legislative Council. Agreeableness to public opinion is now the criterion of Excise policy and administration, and the question whether such public opinion is reasonable or not in the eyes of those who administer the Reserved Departments or of the Government of India is an absolutely irrelevant consideration. Public opinion must be given effect to, whatever view other people might take of its reasonableness or otherwise. It follows from this that that part of the policy of Government which lays down that the reduction and location of the liquor shops should conform to public opinion *as far as it is reasonable* must be modified so as to eliminate from it the consideration that public opinion in order that it may be followed must impress Government as reasonable.

As regards the results of the policy as it is carried out in practice, the evidence available on the point fully justifies the view I have taken of its general character and inadequacy. The acid test by which the success of the policy must be judged is : Has it resulted in steadily reducing the consumption of liquor ? Judged by this test, the policy must be pronounced to be a failure. Not only has it not succeeded in reducing consumption and checking intemperance ; it has not succeeded also in preventing the growth of consumption. Let me briefly summarize the evidence which points to the conclusion.

In the statement submitted to His Excellency Lord Hardinge in November 1913 by Dr. Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, as President of the Ninth All-India Temperance Conference, occurs the following remarkable passage :—

" Expansion in the consumption of both drink and drugs has risen concurrently with expansion of revenue and the dictum of the Secretary of State for India in 1907 that 'there was an undoubted increase in the drinking habits of the people ' is now admitted in every Excise Administration Report that is published — the only difference of opinion being upon the causes and extent of the increase. The latest figures for all provincial areas of the consumption of country liquor, which is rightly regarded as the principal index to the growth of the liquor habit among the people, are conclusive proof of great expansion. In the distillery areas of the various provinces the actual consumption of this liquor has in ten years increased by very heavy percentages. If an analysis is made of the average sale per shop in the major provinces comparing 1902 with 1912, the increases vary from one hundred to 400 per cent. Other alcoholic liquors, such as tari, *pachwai* and foreign liquor, are also extensively consumed, and while it is admitted that the price of one reacts to some extent upon the consumption of others, Excise Administration Reports show expansion in the consumption of all ".

The statement then refers to the opinion expressed by the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, *viz.*

" There can be no doubt that the chief cause of the growth of the revenue is the increase of consumption and the spread of the liquor habit. It can only be concluded that apart from the very serious increase of drunkenness in certain districts, such as Ferozepur, the number of persons who have acquired the habit of indulgence is steadily increasing throughout the province ".

Lest I might be charged with quoting only those opinions which would support my view, I would place before the Committee what the Viceroy said in his reply to Dr. Sarvadhikari as regards this point of the growth of consumption of liquor. Said His Excellency.

" An examination of these statistics shows that during the last seven years, that is, in this period that has elapsed since the revision of our Excise arrangements which followed the report of the Excise Committee in 1905-06, while the revenue per proof gallon or seer from country spirits, from opium and from hemp drugs has increased by 28, 56 and 46 per cent. respectively, the consumption of these articles per hundred of the population has, in the case of country spirits, increased by only 5 per cent. Surely a comparatively insignificant figure. . . . It is true that during this period, the *recorded* consumption of country spirits shows an increase of nearly 41 per cent. ; but I desire to draw attention to the fact that this increase is largely misleading, since the recorded consumption increases with every increase in the substitution of our central distillery system for the out-still system under which no record of consumption can be maintained. During the last seven years, this process of substitution has occurred in very large areas. I am inclined to think, therefore, that the general position we have attained in connection with the consumption of intoxicants in India is scarcely so alarming as your memorial would appear to suggest. *At the same time, the matter undoubtedly merits the close attention of Government with a view to measures being taken to prevent any undue expansion of consumption* " (Italics are mine.)

With regard to this question of the increase of consumption of liquor, the Secretary of State for India observes as follows in his despatch to the Government of India dated the 29th May 1914.

" The general conclusion that the action of Government has checked any widerspread expansion of consumption over India as a whole is unfortunately qualified by the fact that in certain areas alluded to in the Local Governments Reports, an increase alike of consumption and intemperance must be admitted and faced. Higher wages and a rising standard of prosperity, the growth of industrial and urban conditions, the relaxation of social and

religious instructions, and an immitation of western manners in an unfortunate direction tend to and account for, these local increases of consumption apart from any action of Government."

I have thus placed before the Committee both the views, official as well as non-official, as regards the growth of consumption of country spirit. Whether the increase be great, as is alleged by non-official opinion, or small, as is contended by Government, the fact that there *has been* increase of consumption is common ground between both the schools of opinion. Another common ground between them is that in certain areas, particularly in the urban and industrial areas, the increase of consumption (whatever may be the cause) is such that it cannot be regarded as comparatively small or insignificant.

In face of these indisputable facts—facts admitted by all—can it be maintained for one moment that the policy of Government, as judged by the test I have laid down, has not been a failure.

But let us see what the figures of consumption of country liquor are—and in considering these I shall confine myself only to the Bombay Presidency (including Sind). From a diagram appended to the memorandum submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy by Dr. Sarvadhikari to which a reference has been made above—a diagram the accuracy of which was not challenged by Government—it appears that in the year 1900-01 the consumption of country liquor in L.P. Gallons in the province of Bombay and Sind was 17,17,775, and that it rose to 29,33,034 in the year 1911-12.

It is true, as was in fact pointed out by the Viceroy, that in 1900-01 the distillery areas were smaller than in 1911. But it is not contended that all the increase in 1911-12 was due to extension of distillery areas. It cannot now be precisely ascertained how much increase is to be attributed to actual increase of consumption and how much to be accounted for by the substitution of the distillery system for the outstill system. The resolution of the Government of Bombay on the report of the Administration of the Excise Department of the Bombay Presidency including Sind for the year 1918-19 gives the following figures of consumption of country spirit since the year 1909-10.

| Year. | Consumption in proof gallons. | |
|---|---|---|
| | Presidency proper. | Sind. |
| 1909–10 .. .. .. .. | 2,369,101 | 214,878 |
| 1910–11 .. .. .. .. | 2,615,526 | 210,285 |
| 1911–12 .. .. .. .. | 2,554,588 | 227,467 |
| 1912–13 .. .. .. .. | 2,458,950 | 211,691 |
| 1913–14 .. .. .. .. | 2,456,582 | 213,627 |
| 1914–15 .. .. .. .. | 2,341,480 | 207,912 |
| 1915–16 .. .. .. .. | 2,187,387 | 220,045 |
| 1916–17 .. .. .. .. | 2,517,473 | 202,805 |
| 1917–18 .. .. .. .. | 2,656,115 | 196,409 |
| 1918–19 .. .. .. .. | 2,471,992 | 198,162 |
| The figures for 1919-20 and 1920-21 are | | |
| 1919–20 .. .. .. .. | 2,640,985 | 216,723 |
| 1920–21 .. .. .. .. | 1,614,789 | 228,223 |
| 1900–01 .. .. .. .. | 1,717,775 (for both the Presidency and Sind). | |

Making allowance for the fact mentioned above that the distillery areas were considerably smaller in 1900-01 than in 1911-12 or in 1920-21, the one outstanding fact is that these figures prove beyond doubt that, after the lapse of twenty years, the consumption of country liquor stands at a higher figure than what it was at the beginning of the century. It would be unjust to charge Government with deliberately promoting the growth of consumption of country liquor out of a sordid desire to obtain revenue. *Nevertheless, the broad fact remains, viz: that their Excise policy has failed to reduce consumption.* The best that can be urged in favour of that policy is that the expansion of consumption, except in certain areas, has not been great. But this is, after all, a negative merit; what is wanted is a steady and continuous reduction in consumption. Such a positive merit cannot be claimed for the policy, which must, therefore, be adjudged to be a failure.

There can be no doubt that, as stated above, the consumption of country liquor in certain areas shows great increase, so great indeed, as to cause grave anxiety and to demand special attention both from the Government and temperance workers. The following remarks made by the Commissioner of Customs, Salt and Excise, in his report for the year 1920-21, deserve to be noted.

" Bombay City .... showed an increase of over a lakh and a half gallons and the Ratnagiri District, which largely contributes to the industrial population of Bombay, an increase of sixteen thousand gallons. These two substantial increases were mainly responsible for reducing the net decrease for the whole Presidency twenty-six thousand gallons ..... The consumption per head was lowest in Satara (1 dram) and highest in Bombay City (34.2). Next to Bombay come Surat (18.7), Thana (17.2) and Kolaba (10.5). These four areas, together with Ratnagiri, though forming five different administrative charges, possess this characterestic in common that they supply a large amount of industrial labour. It is interesting, therefore, to compare the consumption in their area with its population of roughly 4½ millions with the consumption in the rest of the presidency with the population of 11½ millions. The consumption in the case of the former amounted to 16,51,000 gallons against 9,64,000 gallons in the case of the latter. In other words 4½ millions people in Bombay City and the four neighbouring districts consumed about 1¾ times as much country spirit as the 11½ millons in the rest of the Presidency."

Again the resolution of Government on the above report says :—

" In the Presidency proper and Sind the consumption of country spirit is very much greater in the large towns than else where, a consequence, as the Commissioner points out, which is chiefly due to the conditions under which the people live and work."

Again " It was pointed out last year that the drink problem in this Presidency is mainly an urban problem and the large increase in consumption in Bombay City in a single year from 6,80,000 to 8,36,000 proof gallons is a striking instance. This increase cannot be explained by any variation in population, for the population is probably the same. "

I may add in this connection that the consumption of foreign spirits also shows an increase. Government in their resolution on the administration of the Excise Department for the year 1920-21 remark that the consumption of foreign spirits, including spirits manufactured in India and excised as foreign, shows a marked increase in the Presidency proper, the increase occurring principally in large towns as in the case of country spirit.

3. It will be seen from what I have stated above that the policy of Government is designed to restrict consumption, or rather to be more precise, to prevent its undue expansion. It is not designed, nor is it calculated, to bring about a steady and continuous reduction in consumption.

It follows, therefore, that there must be a change in the object to be attained. The policy must aim at steady reduction in consumption and not merely at preventing its undue expansion. The Government must abandon the view that it is their duty to provide for the needs of those who use alcohol in moderation. It is this false view that has vitiated their excise policy and unless that view is given up I for one do not expect any improvement in the present state of things. Again, public opinion when expressed through legitimate constitutional channels must be followed even though the irresponsible part of the provincial executive may think that such opinion is wrong. Public opinion, it is clear, must not be disregarded, at any rate in the case of Transferred Departments. My suggestions, therefore, for improving upon the policy are as follows :—

(1) The objective of the policy must be changed from prevention of undue expansion of consumption to continuous reduction of consumption.

(2) The notion that it is the duty of Government to provide for the needs of those who use alcohol in moderation must be given up.

(3) Public opinion as expressed through constitutional channels must be followed in every case and not only in those cases in which Government or the local officials consider it to be reasonable.

4, 5, 6, 7 & 8. I shall take up these questions together, as they all relate to the great but by no means easy problem of prohibition.

I have given a good deal of thought to this problem and studied considerable literature published thereon during the past few years. One argument advanced against prohibition would, if sound, be conclusive. It is this, *viz.*, that prohibition is a remedy worse than the disease, inasmuch as far from prohibiting the consumption of liquor and making a people dry, it leads to increase in illicit distillation and the use of more deleterious drugs. In an address on the drug habit delivered at a meeting of the Pharmaceutical Society by Prof. W. E. Dixon, M.D., F.R.S., which has been published in the British Medical Journal of November 19, 1921, that eminent Prof. says :—

" It has been clearly shown that as the difficulties of obtaining alcoholic beverages have increased, become greater, the consumption of drugs and truly noxious substances has become greater also. It is almost inconceivable to what lengths a man will go to obtain something as a substitute for alcoholic beverages and very few drugs, or chemical substances, especially volatile chemicals, have not been used. This evil effect of prohibition has necessarily been more evident in America, where in past times, most of the States have at some time, though generally only for a short time, adopted the principle of prohibition. Wood spirit (methyl alcohol) is one such evil substance ; as little as a teaspoonful may cause blindness and an ounce death. Several cases of poisoning have recently been reported from America.....Ought we

then to advocate prohibition ? Would the benefits so accruing outweigh the disadvantages ? Prohibition in other countries has led to other and worse additions and to industrial unrest, evils which would seem to counterbalance the benefits."

Such is the view of Prof. Dixon. On the other hand, Sir Arthur Newsholme, K.C.B., M.D., late Principal Medical Officer of the local Government Board of England, in his book on "Prohibition in America", says that "there is no evidence that prohibition has caused increased consumption of drugs in substitution for alcohol", and he quotes the opinion of Dr. Bevan, former President of the American Medical Association, that "the number of these cases (drug addicts) is very small compared with the number that were made drug addicts by the free use of alcohol in the past".

In the midst of such conflicting evidence, it is difficult for a layman in the absence of clearly ascertained and reliable data to form decided opinion as to the soundness or otherwise of the argument that prohibition would lead to a more serious evil in the shape of a general use of more deleterious drugs. I would suggest that the Committee should go thoroughly into this question and obtain from the Governments of the several American States which have adopted the policy of prohibition such information as would enable it to decide whether there is any substance in this argument. It must further be considered whether, assuming that prohibition leads to increase in the use of more deleterious drugs, the policy of prohibition cannot be extended to such drugs also. In other words, until and unless it is proved that prohibition will lead to a more serious evil which is beyond prohibition, the case against prohibition cannot be said to be invulnerable.

My sympathies are entirely in favour of prohibition, and though I am prepared to keep an open mind on the question for reasons stated above, I *do* look forward to the time when the various provincial governments of India will be able to adopt the policy of prohibition. *But I do not advocate the adoption of this policy either immediately or in the near future.* My reasons for adopting this position are as follows :—

1. The present financial position of Government is so difficult that it would not be a wise or statesmanlike policy to forego the Excise revenue and thus add to the seriousness of the financial situation. To give up this revenue entirely would not be "practical politics" at the present moment.

2. The first and foremost reform that must be introduced is free and compulsory primary education. I feel so keenly and strongly about compulsory education that I am quite prepared to subordinate radical reforms in excise policy to the claims of such education. The prime need of India at the present moment is education, more education and better education, and not prohibition. I do not think that both these reforms, namely, compulsory education and prohibition, are practicable from the financial point of view at the present moment ; and if a choice has to be made between them I would certainly choose the former. *Prohibition can wait, compulsory education cannot ; it has already waited too long.*

Having thus stated my reasons for not advocating the immediate or early adoption of the policy of prohibition, I shall now consider the question on its own merits, irrespective of the consideration that, for reasons stated above, I hold that it falls outside the region of practical politics at the present moment.

In itself, I consider prohibition to be a practical measure. It may not succeed in preventing or removing the drink evil altogether, just as the Penal Code has not prevented and cannot prevent the commission of offences entirely. Even the most ardent and fanatical 'prohibitionist' has advanced no such extreme claim on behalf of prohibition. All that is claimed is that the drink evil will be so substantially reduced as to cease to be a 'national' evil ; and this is a claim which, I think, must be allowed.

I do not attach much importance to the arguments usually urged against prohibition which are mentioned in question 5, except the last, *viz.*, objection (*e*). As I have already said, if it is proved beyond doubt that prohibition will lead to the use of more deleterious drugs by those or most of those who drink intoxicating liquor and that such use is beyond legislative prohibition, I will not vote for the policy of prohibition ; but this is a point which must be fully investigated before I accept the argument which, on analysis, amounts to this, that prohibition is a remedy worse than the disease.

As regards objection (*a*), no doubt one of the first effects of prohibition will be increased illicit distillation of liquor among those who are addicted to the drink habit, particularly in areas where it can be carried on without detection. But such illicit distillation can be put down and reduced to its normal proportion in course of time. At all events, it can never be so great as to counterbalance the benefits of prohibition.

As regards objection (*b*), it should not be impossible for Government to induce the Portuguese Government and the Indian States to adopt the policy of prohibition. At any rate, the attempt should be made. I feel certain that some Indian States at any rate will adopt the policy.

As regards objection (*c*), the discontent must be faced in the beginning. With firm but conciliatory action, coupled with anti-drink propaganda, the discontent will disappear.

As regards objection (*d*), if such a preventive establishment is necessary it must be maintained. In course of time as illicit distillation is reduced to its normal proportion, the establishment too can be reduced.

Illegal exactions on the part of the establishment must be put down with a high hand. At present the belief is that the Department is very lax in the matter.

I agree that prohibition, although it might not be effective in the present generation, will have a large influence on the next. I do not think that the complete cessation of consumption of liquor in the sense that there will not be a single individual who will drink liquor will ever be brought about. But the nearest approach to that unattainable ideal can be made only by prohibitive legislation and in no other way.

The American National Prohibition Act defines an intoxicating liquor " as any beverage which contains one-half of one per centum or more of alchohol by volume ". I think the principle of prohibition should be applied to every intoxicating liquor as thus defined.

9, 10 and 11. These questions refer to the measures, short of prohibition, which must be adopted with a view to controlling and reducing the consumption of intoxicating liquor.

In replying to these questions, I wish to state at once that I am in favour of local option. In my opinion, even if the goal of complete prohibition is to be reached, it should be reached rather by the method of local option than by action towards that end being taken by the Government. I may quote in this connection what the Rev. Dr. N. MacNicol who, I am glad to say, is a member of this Committee, has said in his articles on " The Liquor Traffic and the New Councils " published in the Social Service Quarterly for April 1921. He says :—

" First, by what road is the goal of complete prohibition to be approached ? There are two alternatives between which a choice must be made. The first is the method of local option. The second is that which would proceed on the Council's own authority to extinguish the traffic by a series of stages to be completed within a definite period of time. The former is the road by which America has travelled to her goal; it is the road upon which Scotland has recently set out. In its favour is the fact that the progress achieved by its means will have been achieved by the people's own deliberate determination and with a clear recognition of the price to be paid for it. This method is accordingly in itself an education of the people in responsibility. Those who choose prohibition for their own district do so while fully aware that in doing so they may be laying a heavy financial burden on their own shoulders.

" This, no doubt, is the high democratic road and those who seek first the strengthening of the people's will for better and better things will prefer this path to others that seem broader and easier and more seductive. If this policy is applied district by district, many districts of the Deccan would, no doubt, adopt prohibition at once, while some Konkan districts and the big cities, if these are taken as units under the scheme, might be much later in doing so. The suggestion is that when a district elects to close down its liquor-shops, half of the loss of the revenue should be made good from the district and half from general sources of taxation. In this way no step towards prohibition is likely to be taken under the influence of a gust of enthusiasm or without counting the cost. If, in order to win their freedom from an evil thing, a price has to be paid, the people must be willing to pay the price. There will thus be a test of the depth and sincerity of their convictions. "

As regards the means or method of exercising local option, I would propose the enactment of a legislative measure on the lines of the Permissive Prohibitory Liquor Bill introduced into the British Parliament some fifty years ago. I may here quote for the information of the Committee the principal provisions of that Bill as I find them given in the " Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Temperance ", published in 1879. They are as follows :—

" *Preamble.*—Whereas the common sale of intoxicating liquors is a fruitful source of crime, immorality, pauperism, disease, insanity, and premature death, whereby not only the individuals who give way to drinking habits are plunged into misery, but grievous wrong is done to the persons and property of Her Majesty's subjects at large, and the public rates and taxes are greatly augmented;

" And whereas it is right and expedient to confer upon the rate-payers of cities, boroughs and townships, the power to prohibit such common sale as aforesaid :

" At any time from and after the passing of this Act it should be lawful for .....or more, rate-payers residing in a municipal borough or parish, by notice in writing under their handsy to require the mayor of such municipal borough or parish or the overseers of the poor of such parish to take the votes of the rate-payers of such municipal borough, or parish, respectively, as to the propriety of bringing into operation therein the provisions of this Act. " (Clause I.)

" This Act shall not be adopted within such borough or parish unless at least two-thirds of the aggregate number of votes so given as aforesaid be in favour thereof. (Clause 5.)

" If the rate-payers of such borough or parish shall determine in manner aforesaid in favour of the adoption of this Act, it shall be lawful, after the expiration of three years from the commencement of this Act coming into operation, for any ratepayers of such borough or parish

again to call upon the mayor of the borough or the overseers of the poor of the parish again to take the votes of the rate-payers of the borough or parish." (Clause 9.)

"From and after the time limited for the commencement of this Act in any borough or parish, as hereinbefore provided, no license whatever shall be granted or renewed for the sale of alcoholic liquor within such borough or parish: and any persons selling or disposing of any alcoholic liquor within such borough or parish shall be dealt with as selling without license, and shall be subject to all the penalties provided for such offence under any Act or Acts of Parliament regulating the sale of alcoholic liquors which may be in force at the time of the adoption of this Act, provided that nothing herein contained shall be held to affect any rules made under the provision of any statute permitting the sale of methylated spirits for use in the arts and manufactures of the United Kingdom." (Clause 10.)

It will be seen from these provisions that the Bill was designed to prohibit only the sale or disposal of liquor. The enactment I propose would, however, apply not only to the sale and disposal of liquor, but also to its manufacture, export, import, delivery and possession.

The powers of prohibition under the enactment should be conferred upon municipalities in urban areas and taluka local boards in rural areas. And the enactment should not be brought into force in any particular area unless at least three-fifths of the total number of voters vote in favour of its adoption.

If the principle of local option were completely adopted, the first part of question No. 12 would not arise since the principle would apply not only to the manufacture, sale, etc., of intoxicating liquor but also to the question of determining the number and location of liquor-shops.

But even though the principle were not completely adopted, I would favour the investing of local bodies with the power of determining the number and localities of shops in their respective areas. And I would make them responsible for raising the revenue that would be reduced by the exercise of the power.

I now come to the points raised in questions 9 and 10.

*Rationing of shops.*—I have no objection to this being tried as an experimental measure. But, with the quantity of liquor supplied to each shop being fixed, the danger is that the licensee will feel tempted to mix water in the liquor. Care must be taken to prevent this danger. Again, the principle of rationing should be applied not only to country liquor-shops, but also to those at which foreign liquors are sold; otherwise, the result of rationing will be to cause increase in the consumption of foreign liquors.

Though I thus approve of the rationing of shops, I want, at the same time, to say that in my judgment the rationing of liquor to customers is more important than the mere rationing of shops. However effective the rationing of shops may be in controlling the total consumption of liquor, it is obvious it cannot control intemperance. What is, therefore, wanted is to keep a register of those who drink and to allow each customer no more than a certain quantity of liquor per day, this quantity being no more than what may be regarded as moderate by medical opinion.

*Increasing the price of liquor.*—I am told there is not much scope now for increasing the price of liquor.

*Reducing the number of shops.*—In my opinion the number of shops can be reduced still further. In my district, I have reasons to think that the reduction has not been made even to the extent proposed by local Excise officials.

*Reducing days and hours of sale.*—There is ample room for improvement in this respect also. From Appendix B published in the report of the Excise Department for 1920-21 it appears that the opening time is the same for all areas, whether urban or rural, in the Presidency proper, *viz.*, 10-30 a.m., whereas the closing time is 8, 8-30, 9 and 9-30 p.m. in different places. The latest 9-30 p.m. is in the City of Bombay only. In no rural area shops are closed at 8 p.m.; in some, *viz.*, in the rural areas of Ahmedabad, Dharwar, Belgaum, Bijapur, Sholapur, Satara, Poona and Ahmednagar, they are losed at 8-30 p.m. In seven urban areas, *viz.*, the urban areas in the districts of Panch Mahals, Surat, Belgaum, Bijapur, Sholapur and Satara, they are closed at 8 p.m. In the urban areas of Thana, Kurla and Bandra in the district of Thana, and all the urban areas in the district of Kolaba, they are closed at 9 p.m.; in all the remaining urban areas they are closed at 8-30 p.m. In other words, in rural areas there are two different hours of closing, *viz.*, 8-30 and 9 p.m. In urban areas the hours are 8, 8-30 and 9 p.m.; in the city of Bombay alone, the closing time is 9-30 p.m.

I presume there is some principle underlying the variations in closing time at different places, though I find it difficult to comprehend what it is. I am at a loss to know in what way local conditions in the urban and the rural areas in the Nasik District differ from those in the neighbouring Ahmednagar District, so that, whereas the shops in the latter are closed at 8 and 8-30 p.m. respectively, they render it necessary to keep them open in the former for half an hour later. Of course, peculiarities of local conditions constitute a factor which must be reckoned with in fixing the hours of sale of liquor. But this does not mean that such peculiarities should be assumed or imagined simply because the places are different. If 8 and 8-30 p.m.

are suitable as closing hours for Ahmednagar, Satara and Sholapur, I fail to understand why they should not suit Nasik also.

I think the hours of sale may be reduced still further at all places. In all urban areas, including the City of Bombay, they should be closed at 7-30 p.m., whereas in all rural areas the closing hours should not be later than 8 p.m.

So far about the usual hours of sale. But the closing hours should be much earlier on days on which the labourers are paid their wages. On such days, the shops should be closed before the wage earners leave their mills, factories, etc.

*Regulating the location of shops.*—If there is any matter in connection with Excise policy in which public opinion may well be an invariable guide, it is the location of the shops. But even in this matter, I have reason to maintain that public opinion is flouted by Government, and that too under the reformed constitution. I shall illustrate this by a concrete instance. There is a liquor-shop maintained in Panchwati on the river side near some of the temples with which that part of the city is studded. The location of the shop is such that it cannot but be an outrage on public opinion and sentiment. In June last year, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Drink Evil Prohibition movement in Nasik, I sent a representation to the Minister of Excise requesting, *inter alia*, that the liquor-shop in Panchwati should be closed. I regret very much to say that the Minister did not show me even the courtesy of acknowledging the receipt of that representation and I have absolutely no information as to what he has done with regard to it. I now learn that out of the three shops in Nasik one has been closed, but *that* one is not the shop in Panchwati. In other words, the shop which public opinion demanded should be closed has *not* been closed ; whereas another, to the keeping of which there was, as far as I know, no public opposition, has been discontinued. I have reason to believe that even some local Excise officials were in favour of closing the Panchwati shop. This means that the public demand for closing the shop at Panchwati was supported by some Excise officials and yet, to the utter dismay of the citizens of Nasik, the Panchwati shop is carrying on its unholy trade in the midst of holy surroundings. These facts which I have stated throw a flood of light upon the policy and methods of Government, and it has given me and other leaders in Nasik very great pain to think that such a thing has been possible under the new constitution.

These are my views on some of the means of controlling the consumption of liquor mentioned in the question. As regards the other means referred to therein, I have no particular constructive proposals to make.

I would, however, urge upon the careful consideration of the committee the feasibility of adopting the principle underlying what is called the Gothenburg system, *viz.*, that no individual, either as proprietor or manager, should derive any private gain from the sale of spirits. In the town of Gothenburg in Sweden, after which the system is called, it was carried out as follows :—

" The whole public house traffic was transferred to a limited liability company, consisting of the most respected members of the community, who undertake by their character not to derive any profit from the business or allow anyone acting under them to do so, but to conduct the business solely in the interests of temperance and morality, and to pay to the Town Treasury the whole profits beyond the ordinary rate of interest on the paid up capital."

The great English statesman Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was in favour of the principle and suggested that the system should be worked out not by private companies but by local bodies.

Whatever may be the precise mode of working out the system, the principle underlying it is absolutely sound. I would even propose that the liquor traffic should be carried on by Government themselves through their own paid agency. The licensees of liquor-shops are after all out for profits ; and their vested interests in the business will always incline them to oppose the cause of temperance or the picketing movement.

Another suggestion which I wish to make is that drunkenness in public places should be made an offence and no leniency should be shown to those who may be convicted of the offence.

13. The existing advisory committees are useful institutions in themselves ; but their utility will be greatly enhanced if the Collector and other officials will show a genuine desire to consult them and follow their advice. Until the local officials begin to realize that it is their bounden duty to ascertain and respect public opinion, these advisory committees will not be as useful as they ought to be.

In my opinion these committees should contain a majority of elected members who should be elected by the ratepayers.

14. My answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative ; and as regards the second part, the evil of drink certainly adversely affects the output of work.

15. In my memorandum submitted to the Compulsory Education Committee and in the oral evidence I gave before that Committee I suggested the following sources of additional taxation to meet the cost of compulsory education :—

(1) Increase of local fund cess from one anna to two annas.
(2) Cess on income tax.

(3) Cess on forest revenue.
(4) Surcharge on railway travelling.
(5) Tax on amusements.
(6) Increase in court fees above a certain limit.
(7) Increase in stamp duties.

As I hold the opinion, as stated above, that priority must be given to compulsory education over excise reform, whatever additional revenue may be derived from these additional sources must be spent on compulsory primary education. I am unable to suggest any other additional sources of revenue than these.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. PRADHAN replied to the President :—" I was for one year on the Advisory Committee on which I represented the Nasik Municipality. There was only one meeting during that period, and my experience in that direction is practically of no use. But I have obtained some information regarding Advisory Committees as given in Government Administration Reports. I think these Committees are useful to some extent. I am unable from personal knowledge to give any opinion as to whether officials bring into effect the recommendations of Advisory Committees, as my experience is restricted to one year at Nasik, and that, too, for one meeting. But my general impression is that the advice of Advisory Committees is generally neglected. Authorities do not seem inclined to attach much importance to the recommendations of these Committees.

" Since 1908 I have been in Nasik. A good deal of illicit distillation goes on in Peth and Bagalan. The problem there is, therefore, difficult to tackle. The people in Peth and Bagalan talukas are, however, law abiding and quiet, and I do not think that there will be any discontent in case drinking is prohibited or restricted and this illicit distillation stopped. They are docile.

" I took part in the picketing movement at Nasik. I have no definite information to show the extent of reduction of consumption of liquor on account of picketing as we found shopkeepers unwilling to give us the information. The picketing was carried on from July to end of October 1921.

" Nasik is supposed to be a religious town. There were three liquor shops in Nasik ; one has since been closed ; one in Panchwati, which ought to have been closed as per representation, has not been closed. The shop in Panchwati attracts good many people. It is in the centre of the city. They can cross the river and go to the shop. The part of the river in which it is situated is like the Back Bay of Nasik. (Here the witness handed over to the President the statement printed below showing the consumption of country liquor in the city and the district of Nasik.)

" To drink is a sin. Drinking in moderation is also considered as a sin by several communities.

" I have studied some American literature on the question of prohibition. I agree that there are two divergent opinions in America on this question. I think the prohibition question for India will have to be studied independently of America's experience ; it will be risky to blindly adopt any one of the views expressed by the Americans. It took 50 years for America to prohibit liquor altogether. Mr. Asquith has recently said ' Prohibition in America is a fraud '.

" I think the Government officials do not carry out faithfully the policy of Government as they ought to. I think the Government would be glad if the consumption of liquor is reduced ; but the policy is carried out by the officials and they do not take as much care as they ought to in order to see that consumption is reduced. The actions of Government officials I think run counter to the intentions of Government. If local officials will be careful enough to carry out the policy of Government in conformity with public opinion, I am sure the result will be reduction in the consumption of liquor. I rely upon man on the spot theory. If the man on the spot will carry out faithfully the policy of Government even as it is, better results will be achieved.

" I do not think that the drink evil is so serious in rural areas as it is in big cities, and it is comparatively easy to introduce prohibition in rural areas where it has not taken deep root. But in areas where mhowra flowers are in abundance there may be considerable increase in illicit distillation of liquor. I am told illicit liquor is stronger and more harmful. With the help of a vigilant Excise Department and healthy public opinion, it is possible to put a stop to illicit distillation.

"I have not studied this problem with special reference to Bombay, nor do I claim to have any intimate knowledge of the industrial conditions prevailing in Bombay or elsewhere. I have said in my written evidence that the consumption of liquor in Bombay has gone high.

" I am in favour of prohibition by legislation.

" I do not think that the rationing system will work satisfactorily. Now what I understand by the rationing system is this. A shop is to be supplied with a certain quantity of liquor, and I think that the quantity which is to be supplied is to be reduced every year. Now, if a shopkeeper finds that his supply is exhausted, he will mix water with the liquor and give it to the customer. I would prefer rationing of liquor to individuals whose names should be registered.

" The question of foreign liquor is a very complicated one. I am told that some foreign liquors are cheaper than country liquor. I cannot say whether there should be rationing for all

foreign and country liquors on one and the same scale. It is a matter of detail. I am alive to the fact that the restriction of foreign liquor will indirectly affect central revenues.

"I am in favour of all remedies laid down in question 10 as they may eventually lead to reduction in the consumption of liquor.

"I have thought about the question of local option. Local boards and municipalities should be invested with this power. I have suggested that if two-thirds of the voters are in favour of prohibition by local option, then it should be given effect to. I do not think that people will like the idea of keeping a register of those who drink, as there are many people who are believed to be drinking in secret. I do not think it should be kept open for the general public to see.

"If a choice has to be made between compulsory education and liquor prohibition I will go in for compulsory education.

"As there is already an increase in railway charges, no further increase is desirable. In the case of first and second class passengers the matter may be considered.

"About High Court fees and stamps we have already had increased court fees introduced on the Appellate Side of the High Court. There should not be any differential treatment between litigants in the mofussil and in Bombay.

"Death duties will give us an appreciable revenue if the difficulty in the case of undivided Hindoo families is removed by legislation.

"I shall be glad if the mills will be taxed as they will be in the long run benefited in their output by the prohibition of liquor. All industrial labour employers should be taxed."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"What I say is this that if I am to make a choice out of compulsory education and prohibition, I will prefer compulsory education."

To Dr. Patil :—"I do not object to the rationing system being tried.

"I think shops should be closed at sunset and opened at 11 or 11-30 a.m. I may say these are matters of detail.

"I feel very strongly that shops should be closed on bazar days and holidays. I also feel strongly that shops should be closed on days when wages are paid.

"Eighteen should be the age limit.

"I do not know whether food is sold in liquor shops."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"The coupon system should be introduced by giving 365 coupons to each individual who drinks. To avoid difficulties coupons should be made strictly non-transferable. If local option is introduced, public opinion can be ascertained and given effect to. I am prepared to say that the municipal franchise and the local board franchise may be lowered in connection with the drink question.

"Drunkenness in public should be made an offence, even though not attended with disorderliness. If a man drinks and goes in a carriage, still I will make it an offence."

To Mr. Mehta :—"It is possible that those who oppose prohibition in America or in England may have vested interests. I am in favour of prohibition in principle. It is quite possible to prohibit liquor altogether.

"It is my general impression that action is very often taken without consulting Advisory Committees.

"The rationing system is worth trying.

"Liquor should be allowed to be taken for medicinal purposes.

"Hotels near liquor shops should also be closed.

"Local option should be regulated by referendum.

"I do not think it will be wise to prohibit liquor in the case of Europeans. Prohibition should be introduced so far as Indians are concerned. No doubt I wish that Europeans should join us in this matter of prohibition but they will have to think for themselves what to do and, if they do not want prohibition for themselves, we must rely on their honesty to prevent liquor being obtained from them by Indians."

*Statement produced by Mr. Pradhan showing the consumption of liquor in the city and the district of Nasik.*

| Year | Nasik City. | | Rest of the District, excluding Nasik City. | | Population, Nasik City | Population, rest of the District. | Number of C.L. shops in the Nasik District. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 30 U.P. | 60 U.P. | 30 U.P. | 60 U.P. | | | | |
| | G. D. | G. D | G. D. | G. D. | | | | |
| 1913-14 .. | 16,156 32 | 28 32 | 1,03,518 16 | 45,350 16 | 33,463* | 8,71,576 | 96 | * As per census of 1911. |
| 1914-15 .. | 12,788 0 | 5,552 40 | 92,921 0 | 57,140 8 | 33,463* | 8,71,576 | 95 | |
| 1915-16 .. | 11,087 24 | 7,398 12 | 69,695 24 | 82,953 3 | 33,463* | 8,71,576 | 95 | |
| 1916-17 .. | 11,159 24 | 13,841 0 | 48,846 24 | 1,61,633 0 | 33,463* | 8,71,576 | 94 | |
| 1917-18 .. | 10,055 24 | 23,076 24 | 47,608 24 | 1,48,873 24 | 33,463* | 8,71,576 | 93 | 30 U. P. liquor was introduced during the year 1917-18. |
| 1918-19 .. | 6,320 16 | 21,565 24 | 31,427 32 | 1,39,287 24 | 33,463* | 8 ,71,576 | 93 | |
| 1919-20 .. | 7,222 0 | 16,251 4 | 31,334 0 | 1,41,973 44 | 33,463* | 8,71,576 | 93 | |
| 1920-21 .. | 9,234 0 | 17,484 16 | 24,400 0 | 1,10,398 32 | 33,463* | 8,71,576 | 91 | |
| 1921-22 .. | 5,664 16 | 13,224 34 | 20,211 8 | 90,005 46 | 38,211† | 7,94,475 | 81 | † As per census of 1921. |

No. 36.

## Replies of Mr. MAVJI GOVINDJI SHETH of BOMBAY.

*Introductory.*

It is one of the queerest ironies of fate that some of the "wettest" countries in the world should have gone "dry" or been strenuously engaged in doing so, and the "driest" country in the world should maintain a yearly growing "wet" record.

At no period of Indian history—Vedic, Buddhistic, Rajput, Mahomedan or Moghul—had the masses of the country the temptation of drinking liquor flung so violently and so assiduously in their face, as in the British period. Whereas in former days wine was to be found at the table of some stray renegade aristocrat, or occasionally in the haunts of the lowest and vilest outcastes, to-day we find a net-work of liquor shops spread over the whole length and breadth of the land, taking it, as it were, to the very doors not only of the village people but even of the hill tribes. A village may be without a school or a temple, a sarai or a masjid, but there is scarcely a cluster of villages to-day in India where there is no grogshop.

Whereas India, this sacred land of ours, should have set an example to the rest of the world in complete eradication of the drink-evil, the United States carried the palm and, in unequivocally declaring for prohibition, have amended their constitution (requiring three-fourths majority of all the States) and have steadily gone on suppressing it.

That the evil is a potent factor in promoting crime, in ruining happy homes, in causing perpetual indebtedness and consequent bondage and misery, and in the steady deterioration of the moral, mental and physical condition of the nation, is now universally accepted.

The Government policy as laid down on paper sounds altruistic enough but its carrying out has evidently been in the opposite direction.

In modern times total prohibition is practical politics and not temperance. The latter has been tried and found wanting. Any tinkering of the problem now will be of no avail. The religions of the country have stern injunctions against it, and it must never be lost sight of that India is pre-eminently a religious country; society sets its face against it and the volume of public opinion is daily growing against it, is becoming more articulate and even violent and, if our legislators do not wake up in time and provide stringent and telling remedies while still there is time, they will be confronted with a situation which will be neither helpful nor desirable.

The problem is not so easy of solution as is commonly supposed. It cannot be handled light-heartedly, and it cannot be solved in a month or in a year. Considerations of revenue preclude the possibility of a short cut. But once the enormity of the curse is realized in all its hideousness nothing should stand in the way of Government of declaring total prohibition as its goal to be progressively realized within a definite period. Palliatives have been tried and failed. What is now required is a root and branch remedy.

*Answers.*

1. I am a merchant by profession, partner in Mavji Govindji and Co., Managing Director of the Hind Co-operative Swadeshi Stores and a Director in the Bombay Industrial Mills Co., Ltd. As a Journalist from 1905-1909, as a student of human affairs, as a public worker, as active Congressman from 1916-20, as a Home Rule propagandist and as a Fellow of the Theosophical Society, I have had some opportunities of study, observation and personal experience of the drink traffic.

2. The Excise policy of Government, as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001-Excise of the 7th September 1905, has been based on a misconception of the duties of Government regarding the moral and material welfare of the community. It is difficult to understand and appraise the reasons underlying the reluctance of Government to "interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation". The Government of India have not failed to interfere with the liberty of the individual or the community in this country wherever they thought that such interference was for the good of the country as a whole. Numerous instances can be quoted in support of the statement. The contention that the present policy would minimise temptation to those who do not drink and discourage excess among those who do has not been borne out by facts. The consumption has steadily gone on increasing both in value and volume in spite of many and frequent increases in the duty charged.

3. Nothing but a total abandonment of the above policy would conduce to the well-being of the community. The recommendation does not stand in need of any further support than the words of the British Prime Minister uttered as early as 1915 when he said :—

> "We are fighting Germany, Austria and drink, and so far as I can see the greatest of these deadly foes is drink. I have a growing conviction based on accumulating evidence that nothing but root and branch methods would be of the slightest avail in dealing with the evil."

4. Yes, and for the following, among other reasons :—

(*a*) All the religions of India have placed the drink habit under a ban, so much so that even the touch of liquor is considered pollution.

(*b*) There is a concensus of opinion all the world over that the drink habit is pernicious and highly detrimental to the moral and material well-being of society.

(*c*) The drink habit in India is not indigenous but an exotic and with the growing feeling against it in the country its eradication is quite easy.

(*d*) The beneficial effects of prohibition in other countries, notably in the United States where in the words of President Harding " in every community men and women have had an opportunity now to know what prohibition means ". " They know " he proceeds, " that debts are more promptly paid ; that men take home the wages that once were wasted in saloons ; that families are better clothed and fed and more money finds its way into the Savings Bank. The liquor traffic was destructive of so much that was precious in American life ".

Regarding the second part of the question, if the United States of America have found it a practical measure there is no reason why India, where the problem is much less acute than in America and the administrative machinery claimed to be most efficient, should not.

The steps required to be taken to bring about the desired end would be—

(*1*) Government should pass a Prohibition Act the preamble whereof should declare total prohibition as the goal to be reached within a period not exceeding eight years ; (*2*) the total average quantity issued to vendors during one year be divided into eight equal portions, each portion to be sacrificed every year so that at the end of the period the whole may have practically disappeared ; (*3*) the import of foreign alcoholic drinks to be treated in the way as the above and a rigorous control to be established on all alcohol used for industrial and medicinal purposes.

5. (*a*) and (*b*). If the illicit manufacture or smuggling of other articles has been and is being successfully prevented or checked, it does not stand to reason why alcoholic drinks should prove an exception.

(*c*) If the suppression of a custom like " suttee " could be successfully carried out in spite of the strenuous opposition of the public on religious grounds, the danger of a " serious discontent " in a case like the present should not exercise our brains at all. Again, if the possibility of discontent generated by the forced establishment of liquor shops against the expressed will of 75 per cent. of the population could not deter the administration from their determined policy, the feared discontent can be treated entirely as illusory.

(*d*) The methods and machinery used for the prevention of the illicit manufacture of other articles can well be utilised for this without any very great extra expenditure.

(*e*) Most of " the other intoxicants and deleterious drugs " are perhaps not so baneful in their effects or tempting or cheap enough, and the facilities in obtaining them will also have to be restricted when the organised method of placing intoxicants in the way of the people is progressively done away with.

6. The effect of prohibition will undoubtedly be great on the present generation, but far greater on posterity. The complete washing out of a course must of necessity take a long time.

7. Prohibitive legislation is not the only means for bringing about the complete cessation of cousumption of alcoholic liquor, but is assuredly the best ; moral suasion, social coercion, boycott, picketing have all been tested and found wanting.

8. Yes, to both fermented and distilled liquors prohibition should be applied as also to toddy and shindi, though the latter are less harmful.

9, 10 and 11. Once the broad outlines of the policy are determined upon and the executive enthused with the true spirit, they should be allowed a free hand to adjust the matters of detail to the exigencies of time and place. The executive may make use of a few or all of the means suggested in working out the policy within the time limit.

12. The local bodies, *i.e.*, municipalities and district and taluka local boards, should not be further encumbered with another obligation.

13. The existing Advisory Committees have proved powerless and therefore unable to exercise any very appreciable influence on the checking of the evil. Under the new dispensation, they would be superfluous.

14. That the evil contributes to an increase in crime and has deleterious effects on the output of work has been conclusively established. The question has long passed out of the sphere of theorising and speculation.

15. Retrenchment, rigid economy, increased attention to starting and fostering forest industries, greater and more active search for minerals in the Presidency, and an entertainment tax are some of the sources of income that casually suggest themselves to the layman. But the general plan must be the one employed by the Government of India in doing away with the opium

revenue from the China traffic. Gradual sacrifice of revenue extended over a period of eight years would not to any appreciable extent disturb the finances of the Presidency, once total prohibition is seriously taken in hand.

16. No, the present system of controlling the sales of opium and hemp drugs will work satisfactorily.

17. Those in the medical profession would be the best judges in the matter.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MAVJI GOVINDJI SHETH replied to the President :—

" Yes. Mr. Purshotamdas Thakurdas and myself were selected by the Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau to give evidence before the Excise Committee. This is my evidence in my individual capacity. I am a Director of the Bombay Industrial Mills and of the Hind Co-operative Swadeshi Stores. I have travelled practically over the whole of India and I can claim to some knowledge of mofussil conditions too.

" My experience leads me to the conclusion that drinking prevails on a large scale in rural areas also. In the matter of drink, conditions in big cities and rural areas are almost equal. It is very difficult to prove this by figures.

" Certain communities consider drinking as a part of their social obligation. Kolis and Mahars never touch a dead body before they have a glass or two of drink. One does not know how the custom began, but now-a-days it has become a habit and a social injunction.

" Kharwas, Lalias (refined sweepers), Dheds, Surat Dangas, Dublas and Konkanees are mostly addicted to drinking. The major portion of Dharalas and Waghras in Ahmedabad District are also addicted to drinking. The drink habit is mainly prevalent among the lower classes.

" I think that drink should almost be considered a crime. Drink in this country is going on and on and on.

" The goal of prohibition should be attained within a definite period of eight years. Other means to stop the use of liquor are mere palliatives, which no doubt have their own value.

" *Toddy.* Unfermented and unadulterated toddy is good.

" *Local option.* Sixty per cent. of the population of adult males and females must vote in favour of any shop in a particular locality.

" *Retrenchment.* I believe that the expenditure of Government too should at least be reduced 20 per cent. in all departments. The administrative machinery has not been overhauled ever since its inauguration. In fact, there can be safely made a reduction of 20 per cent. All services in all Departments have excessive pays. The more I think the more I come to the conclusion that nothing short of Indianizing all services as much as possible will have the desired effect. Both Indians and Europeans must stand on the same level. There must not be a distinction between a European and an Indian. Indianization of services will economise expenditure in the case of both Indians and Europeans alike. I think litigants in Bombay may be taxed so far as the Original Side of the High Court is concerned.

" I would not like the idea of taxing the employers of labour. It will neither be fair nor salubrious. It will be a burden on the industrial future of India."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—

" I consider the drink evil to be a national crime but I will not put it in the same class as other crimes.

" Mahants and Maharajas will not only co-operate in putting down the traffic, but will bless you also if you adopt prohibition."

To Dr. Patil :—

" I remember to have said in the last Workmen's Welfare Conference in Bombay that there should be no liquor shops located in industrial areas. This is covered by my answer to questions 9, 10 and 11. I will personally employ all those methods. In the first place the excise revenue has already suffered during the current year. Picketing, and the boycott terrorization and intimidation that have been indulged in have diminished the habit in various ways, but such spasmodic efforts do not help much the cause of prohibition.

" I think that the hours of sale of liquor in shops should be decided by a vote of the people of the locality, *i.e.*, according to local option. It is a well known fact that in factories and big industrial centres there is a large number of absentees for three days after pay day. All shops of liquor should be closed on pay day. The mill owners association can be prevailed upon to fix a particular day for general payment.

" Liquor should be sold only to adults and I think 18 should be the age limit.

" I am not in favour of subsidizing temperance associations. Public opinion is very much alive to temperance. Temperance education should be a matter for the Educational authorities. Of course, we too can take an intiative in this matter ; nothing is lost in trying.

" According to my plan there will be a gradual reduction every year in liquor. Every year it will go on decreasing. So the process must be applied gently, steadily and surely every year to achieve the goal of total prohibition within 8 years."

To Mr. Jadhav :—

" I have travelled almost throughout India and from any experience I say that a village may be without a school or a temple, a sarai or a masjid, but there is scarcely a cluster of villages in India where there is no grogshop. I have no detailed knowledge of the Poona District. I believe that there is not a single important village in India where there is no liquor shop. The consumption of liquor goes on increasing in value and volume in spite of many efforts on the part of Government to the contrary. This can be proved by figures from Government records throughout India for the past ten years. If our legislatures will not wake up in time and provide stringent and telling measures while still there is time, undesirable methods will be used and there is likelihood of disturbances, if it is carried out in that fashion.

" The bulk of the country has never taken to liquor. In Puranas, histories and dramas there is no trace of liquor being used by a middle class man, except a stray renegade aristocrat or the lowest of the low. At no time of history do we behold such a spectacle as we now see in India. We know of sporadic cases of liquor being used by the nobility amongst the Moghuls and Mahomedans or the Persian and Grecian kings. I have also gone through a lot of Sanskrit literature, but my efforts in that direction did not lead me to a belief of the prevalence of the traffic on any thing like the present scale. It is possible that I may not have been better informed.

" Education can never be a substitute for prohibition in this matter. Education has its own value but looking to progressive countries like America, Germany, England and Japan where compulsory education is in force, I find that literacy has played little or no part in putting a stop to drink there. I shall prefer prohibition to education, if a question arose of choosing between the two."

To Mr. Mehta :—

" Rationing should be controlled by Government. Government must take the whole matter into their hands.

" I believe that total prohibition can safely be carried out within eight years."

No. 37.

REPLIES OF THE REV. J. F. EDWARDS, EDITOR, "DNYANODAYA", BOMBAY.

1.. My profession is that of a missionary and an editor. I have had opportunities of forming my opinions by nearly fourteen years' residence and work in India, the whole of this working period being spent in Bombay City save for twenty months when I was working in Sirur, Poona District. For my first five or six years I laboured as an English chaplain among English civilians, soldiers and sailors in Bombay, to which work I was appointed by my church in England, which is my mother country, and where before leaving for India I did social reform work in such centres as London, Birmingham, Sheffield and Newcastle. For the past eight years or more I have been engaged in work as a missionary. The opinion given in the following paragraphs is, further, not merely my own, but represents the considered findings of a gathering of missionaries called together for this purpose at Mahabaleshwar, a company drawn from thirteen different missions (European and American) working in the area of the Bombay Presidency. This conference of missionaries met last night and again this morning and after a full discussion authorized me to forward those findings as representing their considered views as well as my own.

2. (*a*) We believe that the excise policy of Government, as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, has been shown to be inadequate. (*b*) While the doubling of excise revenue in ten years proves that policy to have been successful from the standpoint of raising revenue, on the other hand the small percentage of decrease in consumption shows the policy has not been an effective check on intemperance, the great increase in consumption by the City of Bombay with its 460 liquor shops being a sad blot on " Bombay the Beautiful ".

3. We believe the excise policy of Government calls for radical alteration and we would express appreciation of the fact that the Bombay Government has itself initiated such alteration by its recent decision to reduce the liquor supplies in Bombay City by ten per cent. and elsewhere by five per cent. on the basis of the figures of 1920-21. We would urge that the ten per cent. reduction be applied to city and country alike, that a pronouncement be made by Government to the effect that this reduction will be an annual one, and that there be a reduction also of ten per cent. in the number of liquor shops each year.

4. We are in favour of total prohibition as a goal for the following reasons :(*a*) We believe India's awakened conscience demands it, in accordance with every religion in the land : (*b*) we believe the satisfaction of this demand by constitutional methods will do much to allay unconstitutional agitation ; (*c*) we believe facts demonstrate that prohibition increases economic prosperity, that it diminishes disease, poverty, vice and crime, and that it is the most effective method of preventing the spread of the drink habit.

We believe the first two years of prohibition in the United States of America have great value for India, not only sustaining the reasons we have just mentioned but proving prohibition to be a practical measure for India. The " New York Times " recently declared prohibition had been " at least 75 per cent. effective, speaking generally of the country as a whole, and there are many sections where it reaches 90 per cent." On January 16 this year, completing the first two years of prohibition in the United States, Prohibition Commissioner Royal A. Haynes stated among other things that arrests for drunkenness throughout the United States had decreased 60 per cent. whereas arrests in European countries had enormously increased during the same period, and that thirty-seven insurance companies, doing 80 per cent. of the country's insurance business, reported 1921 as the healthiest year in the history of the United States. As the first step towards carrying out prohibition in India we would suggest that since garbled reports are reaching India concerning the actual results of American prohibition, two Indian members of your committee should be deputed to visit the United States. As the second step, we suggest that prohibition be inaugurated by legislative enactment, and be enforced by Government authority, such a measure to provide for attaining the goal of total prohibition in ten years, save in the cases of such areas as may declare their desire for prohibition at once, in which cases we recommend that their desire be granted at once.

5. In general, we would express our belief, that the cost and difficulty of prohibiting the liquor traffic will not be as great as is feared, no greater than is the difficulty of regulating it at present, for we believe that what increased cost and difficulty there may be will be more than counter-balanced by the reduced crime and expenditure of a sober community. Turning to the particular objections of this policy (*a*) we believe that as reasonable an enforcement of prohibition saw can be secured in India as can be secured for any other law, in spite of the facility for obtaining liquor by the illicit means referred to ; (*b*) we recognize that there will be a certain amount of rmuggling, but we are convinced that the advantages gained by prohibition will far outweigh the evil effects of such illicit traffic. We think it not unlikely that Indian States and Portuguese territory will decide to imitate whatever policy is adopted by the British Government in their lespective neighbourhoods, particularly if the former should find they are being made the resort

of the drinking classes. The history of the prohibition movement in the United States shows that many prohibition centres were surrounded by towns still having liquor which it was difficult to prevent being smuggled in, but as prohibition grew in popularity and effectiveness, very many of such licensed towns voluntarily gave up all licenses before the enactment of the prohibition amendment. (*c*) Since we believe the classes referred to are in a minority, we would suggest that their possible discontent should not be permitted to rob the great majority of the benefits that prohibition is calculated to confer on them and on India as a whole. (*d*) We believe the benefits of prohibition in India would be so great that the temporary additional expenditure required to cope with the evils mentioned would be more than justified. (*e*) We are of opinion that this probability is not as great in India as in western countries, and even regarding the latter we would point out that the experience of the United States has proved that the susbstitution of such intoxicants and drugs is infinitesimally small.

6. We believe that prohibition would be effective in the present generation, for the reasons previously stated, and that the second generation enjoying prohibition would be even more greatly benefited.

7. Whilst we believe prohibition legislation to be a necessity if India is to be saved from the evils of intemperance, we believe also in the necessity of moral suasion which aims at the total abstinence of the individual, and we would request that your committee urge Government to make adequate provision for temperance instruction in all day-schools.

8. We believe the principle of prohibition should be applied to all distilled and fermented liquors, since these produce their harmful effects, one of these being the keeping alive of the thirst for alcohol.

9-10. Believing that total prohibition is the goal to aim at, we would agree to the various means suggested for controlling consumption, save in cases where the people desire immediate prohibition, partial or total, which desire we request, should be granted. Concerning the reducing of ' days and hours of sale ' we would urge the immediate adoption of Sunday closing, also the closing of all shops on each holiday, as well as during the midday recess of millhands and on pay-day and the day following, which reduction the Bombay Government declared to be under its consideration on July 25, 1921.

11. We believe the principle of local option should be introduced immediately, *first*, because of its democratic and educative value, its training of the people in public spirit, and its helping to guide India's political aspirations into worthy and constitutional channels ; *second*, because local option was the method whereby the United States reached its prohibition enactment, the people thereby indicating what they desired and being assured of obtaining it ; *third*, we would draw special attention to the fact that local option in Ceylon is reported to have been practicable, popular and effective, and that polls have been taken also in India, *e.g.*, Nagpur, where the people's vote against liquor was most emphatic.

As to " the means " whereby " local option should be exercised," we believe it should be exercised by the electorate within the area of each municipality or district. For this purpose we would favour every possible method of widening the electorate, though for every reason we are opposed to the idea of postponing the first application of local option until the electorate is widened, for we hold that India's citizens should as early as possible have the privilege of saying what influences should, and should not, affect their community and their homes.

12. We believe it to be preferable that the number and location of shops should be determined by the vote of the electorate rather than by municipalities or districts merely, for then the responsibility rests on the people themselves. What we wish to emphasize is that the wish of the people be ascertained on each aspect of this matter. Concerning the revenue difficulty we would remark, *first*, that to raise revenue from a traffic we believe facts demonstrate to be corrupting the people while the children of the people are being educated out of the proceeds of that revenue is a process of building with one hand and tearing down with the other. Moreover, in view of the grave evils arising from the liquor traffic we cannot regard it as morally defensible, and we feel that what is morally indefensible should not be continued as a source of revenue; *second*, as to each locality making up the revenue lost by the adoption of prohibition, it might well be asked, as an English member of the excise committee for the United Provinces has asked : If, in any area, the inhabitants, by voting for the cessation of the common sale of drink and drugs, reduce the expenditure on police, prisons and lunatic asylums, and by their abstinence raise the efficiency of the whole community, will they receive financial compensation ? *Third*, we realize the force of the argument that each district voting for reduced liquor facilities should be asked to meet its loss of excise revenue, or some proportion, in order to prove the sincerity of its reforming zeal, but we dissent from it. We believe, as a matter of fact, that the people as a whole would prefer a direct tax for the purpose of education, rather than suffer the corrupting influence of the liquor shop near their schools which are largely financed by Government out of liquor revenue. But beyond this, we would urge on Government the importance of accepting as a settled fact the best minds of India have apparently decided both against the liquor traffic and against the use of revenue obtained from liquor, a conclusion which we believe gains support from the latest excise figures, which we understand as showing that

whereas the Bombay Government expected 424 lakhs of excise revenue this last year, they were able to obtain only 331 lakhs, the Finance Minister himself observing that ' the public exchequer should be independent of such precarious assistance '. For these and other reasons we would therefore suggest that to penalise districts which decide to close liquor shops will not conduce to the harmony of the body politic. We have indicated below various possibilities that occur to us of dealing with the revenue question.

13. We believe the evil results of the liquor traffic are so patent as to show that the existing advisory committees cannot be regarded as satisfactory, though we recognize there are exceptions. Too often have liquor shops been allowed to exist in close proximity to educational institutions, in one instance this being done in spite of protests from the school managers, teachers and parents of pupils. We believe therefore that these advisory committees should be appointed by the electorate, and should have a predominating non-official element, that their meetings should be held in public and that they should be invested with powers of inspection and of enforcing the proper execution of whatever reforms are made regarding excise.

14. We believe India's daily press establishes the conclusion that crime increases in proportion to the granting of liquor licenses. Statistics the world over show that alcohol deadens the moral sense and diminishes self-control ; on the contrary, the enactment of pohibition has led to such a reduction of crime as to result in the closing of many prisons in the United States. Scientific experiment and business experience alike show how drink diminishes the output of work, makes the nerves unsteady, incapacitates workers and leads to such irregularity of attendance as causes loss of production. On the general economic value of prohibition we would quote the unbiassed testimony of Sir Arthur Newsholme, M.D., K.G.B., late Principal Medical Officer of the Local Government Board in London, who in his book embodying his personal observations of prohibition in the United States observes : ' The country which distinguishes itself by abolishing these drinks will, other things being equal, in my opinion inevitably attain quickly an industrial and economic superiority over all countries which continue to follow the old ways. '

15. We recognize that the prospect of the loss of three or four crores of revenue through reduction or extinction of liquor facilities seems staggering and that it would seem to present the most formidable obstacle to prohibitive legislation. It should not be forgotten, however, that the case of the United States proves this difficulty to be far more terrifying in prospect and anticipation than in actual experience, for the first year under prohibition enabled the United States to show the greatest revenue it ever had in any single year, besides which, bank savings among the poor and middle classes increased by billions of dollars, and sites hitherto occupied by drinking saloons were used in productive business concerns, the whole tendency of the nation being towards thrift. In view of such facts we believe the Bombay Government can safely adopt the policy of reducing excise revenue at the definite rate of ten per cent. per annum. In addition to this we believe retrenchment will be found possible in certain departments. Take the department dealing with matters affecting religion. The English Church in India has announced that it is looking towards is disestablishment and disendownment. This will set free a certain amount of public funds, and we believe also that many Hindu leaders might similarly be found willing to forgo voluntarily certain Government subsidies to Hindu temples, especially if it became clear that local option or prohibition were impossible on financial grounds. Besides possible retrenchment, we believe there are other available sources of revenue yet untapped which might be drawn on by Government. Among such possible sources we would venture to name the following : Doubling the income tax over a certain limit of income, and trebling or even quadrupling it in case of the very wealthy (we would hope that an earnest recommendation may go from your committee to the Government of India that all income tax increases above the present income tax rates be credited to *Provincial* revenue) ; increase of taxation on certain forms of luxury such as tobacco, scents, jewels and others which might be mentioned ; increase of taxation on unearned increments ; taxation of the high dividends of companies, say of dividends over ten per cent ; wheel taxes on vehicles outside municipality limits. With reference to the possibility of new taxation we have ourselves noted and would have you note also that some of the Western India Liberals have expressed their belief that the people would not be opposed to an increase in direct taxation, the argument set forth by these Liberals being that " since the excise revenue really comes from the pockets of the masses, taxation to that extent would be no additional burden if prohibition were undertaken, while the material and moral gain resulting from abolishing drink would be enormous ".

16. We believe that the promiscuous use of opium and hemp drug is dangerous to the physical condition of the people, and that their use should be restricted to medical purposes through the prescriptions of authorized doctors and *vaidyas*.

17. We believe the giving of opium to young children is far too prevalent among Marathas, Mahars and Mangs, that it can be too easily purchased in weekly bazaars and in licensed shops, and since it reduces the disease-resisting power of the body and contributes greatly to the death-rate among children we recommend that legislation be enacted forbidding opium to be sold for other than medicinal purposes.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

The Revd. Mr. EDWARDS replied to the President :—" The opinion given in my written evidence is my own and also represents the considered findings of a gathering of missionaries called together for this purpose at Mahableshwar. At that time, roughly speaking 35 or 40 missionaries were present and the question was fully discussed at the meeting and the conclusions were then arrived at. I spent 20 months in Sirur, Poona District. It is my experience that this drink problem is more complicated and very difficult, at any rate, in cities rather than in rural areas. It is very difficult to make a comparison between the state of the City of Bombay when I first came to India and the present state, so far as drunkenness among the labouring classes is concerned since, for my first five or six years I laboured as an English Chaplain and my contact with the Indians was not as intimate then as it is now. But my general impression is that drinking is on an increase. I have been in contact with Indian Christians for the past eight years and I believe there is an advance in drink among them. In the City of Bombay drinking is, generally, on an increase among all classes. During my six years experience in 1908-1914 as an English Chaplain among soldiers and sailors in Bombay, I found there were many facilities and temptations for them to drink. In my capacity as an English Chaplain I was able to persuade many of them not to drink. Temperance work had an appreciable effect upon them. I am confident that temperance work for Indians also will have a gradual and sure effect. As regards both Christians and non-Christians I have done temperance work among the various communities in the City of Bombay. There have been some practical results. I have found that illiteracy is not the root cause of this evil, as I know educated men who are victims of alcohol, but their drinking is done mostly in secret. The only sure remedy is to remove the temptation from the people's way as far as possible. Temperance lectures, magic lanterns and other environments will do very much good. I am of opinion that evening meetings, greater facilities in the formation of reading-rooms, innocent games and educational schemes in the nature of the Y. M. C. A. organization will be fruitful. I do not think that the mere raising of intellectual status will very materially contribute to the reduction of alchoholic consumption. To carry out educational propaganda first, before removing the drink temptation, is the wrong order, for education alone will not solve this problem of drink.

" I may assure the Committee that a large number of the Englishmen in India will be glad to see this temptation of drink removed both from their own path and from that of Indians. To represent all English people in India as drinkers is a grave libel on them.

" I consider the excise policy of Government to be inadequate because it had not removed the drink temptation. Its adequacy will depend upon the removal of the temptation. To make the policy adequate remove the temptation as far as possible.

" Total prohibition is a very practicable proposition in India, provided the policy is gradually introduced.

" I am of opinion that total prohibition can be completely brought into operation within a period of ten years. What I mean is this that total prohibition may not be practicable immediately as by a stroke of the pen, but it can be made practicable by adopting the methods of local option and by reducing consumption gradually during the next ten years.

" I very strongly disagree with the view of Archbishop Goodier condemning Government not being able to go below a certain minimum. I would urge that a local option experiment may be made for a period of years, at the end of which period the question might be reconsidered.

" My impression is that both among the Protestant Christian communities in the City of Bombay and also in the Indian Roman Catholic community there is far too much drinking.

" I agree that Americans have taken 50 years to bring about the present results. Indians should have the same privilege of expressing their opinion on this subject as Americans have. I feel sure Indians would show even more pronounced views than Americans. Local option was the remedy they adopted before the goal of actual prohibition was attained. I think that all adult males should exercise this right of local option in India. I further think that this right to vote should also be given to adult females. I think that if drunkards are given the right to vote on this subject, there will be a surprisingly large number of drunkards who will ask to have the drink temptation removed.

" The introduction of graded temperance text-books in all day-schools, high schools and colleges will be of great use in impressing upon the minds of the younger generation the bad effects of alcoholic drinks.

" The question of toddy or shindi should also be simultaneously dealt with.

" I would not consider it unsafe to give the right of local option to the political propagandists of the day, but on the other hand I would trust them in this matter of drink as I would trust all other citizens of India.

" I very much prefer that people as a whole should have the direct vote for local option than that merely indirect representations be made through municipalities and local bodies.

"With reference to the serious financial difficulties that will arise whenever the people of India have the power given to them to close the drink shops, I believe the whole of India's economic condition will be immensely improved by the stopping of the liquor traffic and by the consequent moral and material progress of the people. This is my uncalculated factor and is in my opinion so great as well nigh to be incalculable. I therefore cannot help regarding official nervousness arising from financial fears as more of a bogey than anything else, a bogey that will lose much of its terror when fearlessly tackled. This opinion which I hold regarding the needless fears concerning the apparently insurmountable nature of the serious financial difficulty I would support in three or four ways; first, there are the available resources of revenue yet untapped which I have indicated in my written evidence; second, I am of opinion that the whole economic situation will be so strongly improved that those untapped resources may after all not be needed; third, when India sees that the power of local option is put into its hands and that the people have the right to close all liquor shops, this fact of itself will exercise such an excellent influence on the whole of India's social and political situation as immensely to improve India's economic and financial condition; fourthly, I am satisfied that a very large majority of the people will be found willing to pay a reasonable amount of new taxation for the purpose of educating the rising generation when they are given the right to decide whether the liquor trade shall be continued or not.

"I would not consider unfavourably an additional tax on employers of large industrial labour. In fact, this is the kind of idea referred to in my words; 'taxation of the high dividends of companies, say, of dividends over ten per cent.'."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"So far as the drink problem is concerned, difficulties have been greatly magnified and exaggerated. I think that illicit distillation in this country can be stopped. For religious purposes non-alcoholic provision of wine is quite possible.

"Those whose income is even below Rs. 2,000, must also be taxed though personally I believe the general economic improvement may render it unnecessary.

"I am quite sure missionaries and religious leaders will co-operate with Government."

To Dr. Patil:—"The age limit should be not lower than 21. Liquor shops should be closed on holidays. The hours of sale and also of opening and closing liquor shops should be kept in such a way that there would not be any facilities for drunkards to go there and have drink. There should be restriction on foreign liquor also. I cannot say whether immature liquor is harmful."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"I think primary education must not be stopped in any case. Drinking is also prevalent in the educated classes though done more secretly.

"A considerable percentage of crimes is due to drinking."

To Mr. Lalljee:—"Labouring classes are labouring under great hardships."

To Mr. Mehta:—"There should be restrictions on both foreign and country liquors.

"India's desire for education will lead her to pay her educational bill."

No. 38.

REPLIES OF KHAN BAHADUR D. B. COOPER, M.L.C., OF SATARA.

1. As a contractor and trader chiefly in the excise line of 25 years' standing in this Presidency, I have had ample opportunities of observing the Excise policy of Government in its various stages of evolution.

I have had personal knowledge of the working of practically all the different sytems of Abkari administration successively adopted by Government, *e.g.*—

(*a*) district monopoly farming system with minimum guarantee ;

(*b*) supply contract and separate shop system ;

(*c*) fixed fee and maximum selling price system ;

(*d*) auction and restricted selling price system ;

(*e*) auction and unrestricted selling price system.

2. (*a*) I agree generally with the Excise policy enunciated in the Resolution in question but am strongly opposed to the principle underlying the policy of discouraging drink by making the tax on liquor as high as possible. I may at once say that had this course been adopted in moderation by the local Government there would have been no harm done to the laudable cause of discouraging drink. But as this easy means of increasing a source of revenue has been freely indulged in, the result has been the contrary. Making liquor extremely dear so as to put it beyond the means of ordinary consumers, after knowing it to be a necessity to a certain degree in their case, is a step morally indefensible and, I may add, in these present times politically also inexpedient. (*b*) The actual result in practice of the policy of achieving a minimum of temptation by a maximum of taxation has been the exploition of the none too easy means of the drinking classes. It has spelt the ruin of those unfortunates who cannot resist the temptation to drink and, in the case of the remaining users of alcohol, has been instrumental in draining away a substantial share of their hard-earned wages. It has driven some to commit breaches of law or morality for the purpose of securing the gratification of their cravings, and others to spend for a few moments of intoxication the money which otherwise would have kept off the wolf constantly menacing their doors. All this misery, these crimes and heart-burnings could be avoided if a sensible course of making drink available in *moderate* quantities at *reasonable* and *fair* prices were adopted.

The prevailing unrest and dissatisfaction among the labouring classes at big industrial centres and their constant demand for higher wages can in no inconsiderable degree be attributed to the provokingly high prices of drink. It passes for a necessity among these classes of men, living as they do a life of hard manual labour in uncongenial surroundings and in a trying atmosphere. The wants of Indian labourers are few. Luxury is unknown to them both by nature and disposition. A little recreation to raise their spirits at the end of a tiresome day is all that they need and this cannot be denied to them. It is undoubtedly unfortunate that drink happens to be their sole recreation for the time being. But we have to reckon with it as a fact and shape our course accordingly. Now cereals are not so very costly, nor the scanty clothing they use, as compared to the exorbitant prices they have to pay for liquor. It is this item of their daily expenditure which tells upon their resources and consequently upon their health. And they hold Government responsible for this state of things. This sullen attitude on their part is easily exploited for party ends by clever political wire-pullers. The destruction and looting of liquor shops which bulked so largely during the recent demonstrations in Bombay is a positive proof of a long-hoarded vindictiveness on their part against liquor shops, Government agents in their opinion carrying out Government's policy. It is a noticeable circumstance that when the prices of cereals and clothing shot up high in 1919-20, the mill-hands looted grain and cloth shops in Bombay. They played the same game with liquor shops recently. It would be a practical blunder if we were to read in it a desire on their part to have no liquor-shops instead of a desire to protest against and revenge the fact of their having to pay higher prices for their ususal pegs. That their demand for the lowering of the prices of liquor is based on equitable grounds can be judged from the following statistics :—

| | Gross Revenue. Rs. |
|---|---|
| 1876-1877 .. .. .. | 32,46,000 |
| 1913-1914 .. .. .. | 1,99,00,000 |
| 1920-1921 .. .. .. | 4,04,56,000 |

The quantity consumed during 1876-77 was more than that during 1920-21 and the strength of liquor in those days was highly in excess over the present. Thus people have to pay now 12 times the prices paid in 1875 for a lesser quantity of weaker strength. The volume of consumption is no doubt reduced by that policy. But the cost is not only the lion's part of the earnings

ot the classes concerned, but an endless list of grievous privations to drinkers as well as their dependants at home. Does this show that Government's policy as enunciated in the letter is followed in the spirit ? Has any revenue been sacrificed ? If any sacrifice is made at all, it is a sacrifice of the consumer's, and not Government's revenue. People have perforce lost a portion of their supply of liquor but for the quantities retained have to pay a price out of all proportion to them.

3. I for one am very strongly of opinion that for the stabilization of prices all round and, for the matter of that, the removal or at least mitigation of the prevailing unrest among industrial classes, liquor should be made available to the public at reasonable prices in moderate quantities. I would strongly advocate reduction in the price of liquor and the rationing of sales up to the present figures which are normal. The following principles may be laid down for the purpose :—

(*a*) discontinuance of competitive auction sales for the right of vend of liquor ;

(*b*) fixation of the maximum selling price ;

(*c*) reduction of still-head duty ;

(*d*) rationing of yearly sales at shops on the bases of the average yearly consumption during the past 8 years to be fixed once for all ;

(*e*) abolition of all shops selling less than 500 gallons of liquor per year ;

(*f*) prohibition of the manufacture and sale of spirituous imitations of brandy and whisky produced from the same bases as country liquor and by the addition of flavouring agents ;

(*g*) prohibition of the import of non-genuine brandy and whisky not conforming to a fixed standard of quality both as regards bases for distillation and the minimum time required for maturity ;

(*h*) gradual reduction of country spirit to 60° U. P. ;

(*i*) elimination from the license conditions of trivial details which are a menace to shop keepers ;

(*j*) uniform restrictions on possession and sale of country and foreign liquors.

4. No. It is neither feasible nor desirable in the immediate future. It is not feasible because :—

(*a*) India abounds in palm, mhowra and other trees, forming bases for illicit distillation ;

(*b*) India has extensive ranges of hills and ravines where clandestine distillation can be carried on with impunity ;

(*c*) the frontiers of British India abut for thousands of miles on the territory of Indian states and foreign possessions and there is an open sea board of vast dimensions, facts which preclude the possibility of our having genuine prohibition.

It is not desirable as long as it remains the only means of recreation and festivity to the poorer classes.

It is wrong to look upon drink as an evil imported from the West. The drink habit existed in India, long before the British, or for that matter, any other foreigner acquired a foothold on the Indian soil. The ancient classical literature of the Hindus abounds in references to sweet and tasteful wines. Scholars have proved that Kalidas lived in the sixth century. This prince of ancient Indian poetry in the course of his masterly description of the lamentations of Aja, the father of Dasaratha and the grandfather of Rama, over the death of his queen Indumati, has the following :—

मदिराक्षि मदाननार्पितं मधु पीत्वा रसवत्कथं नु मे ।
अनुपास्यसि बाष्पदूषितं परलोकोपनतं जलांजलिम् ॥

" O bright-eyed one, how will you now drink a libation of simple water mixed with (my) tears, after drinking (as you used to do while here) sweet wines from out of my mouth ! "

Again in the 6th Act of Shakuntal, the well-known play of the same literary craftsman, we come across the following passage :—

श्यालः—महत्तरस्त्वं प्रियवयस्क इदानीं मे संवृत्तः । कादंबरीसाक्षिकं
प्रथमसौहृदमिष्यते । तच्छौण्डिकापण मेव गच्छामः ।

The Royal brother-in-law :— " Fisherman, you have now become a very great friend of mine. It is desirable to have our first friendship consecrated (*lit.* attested) by wine. Let us, therefore, go to a liquor-shop."

These passages go to show that wine not only existed but had access to high, fashionable and influential circles and was publicly sold in the market in the sixth century after Christ, if not earlier. The same inference about the pre-British popularity of this article in India is suggested by its being considered the fourth among the 14 gems churned out of the ocean by the Gods and Demons, *cf.* the famous verse :—

लक्ष्मीः कौस्तुभपारिजातकसुरा धन्वंतरिश्चंद्रमाः etc.

Coming to more accurately recorded historical times, times when the Peshwa ruled supreme in Maharashtra, we find that since 1750 A.D. liquor tax was considered a normal source of state revenue and regularly figured in the Peshwa's budgets. After the transfer of sovereignty from the Peshwas to the East India Company the latter continued for some time with but slight modifications the practice obtaining under the Peshwas. What the Abkari Act, therefore, subsequently did was not to invent, but to systematise and control, the Abkari revenue.

Another consideration of great practical importance in this connection is that consumption of drink in this Presidency is very small compared with what it is in European countries. It is only 7·8 drams of London proof per head per annum. Even making an allowance of 50 per cent. for the non-drinking classes in the Presidency, the liquor consumption there comes to only 15 drams per head per annum or two bottles per head of the drinking class per annum. This small indulgence can hardly do the physical harm which uninformed popular opinion takes such delight in attributing to it. It is necessary for the very existence of the class of men who use it as long as their habits and education remain unchanged. Any premature and forced curtailment of its use by them is likely to lead to disastrous results. Nowhere in the world has total prohibition really succeeded. India is the last country in the world where for the reasons mentioned above it can ever be successfully carried out. Artificial measures of putting a wholesale stop to drink are very likely to give rise to fiscal offences of unknown variety and magnitude. It will merely be undoing whatever good has been done to the public in this Presidency by the Bombay Abkari Act. There are definite indications that if licit consumption is stopped, illicit consumption will take its place. Illicit liquor will be had much cheaper than licit liquor is to-day. What prohibition will achieve, therefore, is that the wonted control will have been withdrawn, a source of revenue sacrificed, and unrestricted impetus given to drink; in other words it will end in the sacrifice of the present good and aggravation of the present evil. Prohibition is a mere shibboleth—a dream to be realised in Utopia.

5. It is impossible to anticipate, exhaust and prevent as fast as human skill can invent, ways of evading drink restrictions. So long as alcohol is consumed in moderation, without becoming a source of social evil, and can be placed at a price within the means of individual persons, there seems no justification for putting a stop to it. The objections urged against the adoption of the prohibition policy are insurmountable, particularly (*b*). The remaining objections can be met only at a fabulous cost to the state.

6. It is not prohibition but education against the use of alcohol which can create any very large influence on the next generation. Turning to such educated classes of Indians as have no religious objections to drink, we find a greater sobriety and dryness in them than in their forefathers. The use of alcohol among their youths is rare and they are scarcely ever seen to frequent liquor shops. It is a truism to say that an educated youth can resist temptation better than an uneducated youth.

7. Legislation is futile as a means to bring about a complete abstinance from liquor, nor is there any other means which cannot be successfully frustrated in effect within the range of practical politics.

8. The use of toddy, shindi, wines and fermented liquors, such as ale, beer, porter, being much less harmful, should be left unrestricted by a maximum reduction in tree tax and duty, in order to wean the public from alcoholic beverages of a more ardent nature. Drinks of former class are nutritious as well as conducive to health, but the existing restrictions on them serve to drive people to the latter class of drinks which intoxicate faster and do harm more certainly.

9. The present figures of consumption are not at all in excess of what the moral and material well-being of the drinking classes demands and would allow. Issues may be restricted on the basis of this limit. *Education* should be made *compulsory* which alone can control consumption.

10. (*a*) Yes, but the limit should not be reduced further.

(*b*) No. It should gradually be decreased.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) No. It induces illicit storage of liquor and illicit sale by unauthorised persons. Its reaction has a worse effect.

(*e*) Yes. Both of country and foreign.

(*f*) No. It is not desirable to have shops in slums or in by-lanes where decent people can visit in secrecy.

(*g*) The sale of genuine foreign matured liquors and not spurious raw imitations may be allowed with the same restrictions as regards limit of possession and sale as are imposed on country liquors.

Wines and fermented liquors which are less injurious and more nutritious should be encouraged along with toddy.

(*h*) This should conform to local requirements. A hotel license would be useless in a village. A large town cannot do without a foreign " on " shop.

(*i*) Yes. The minimum being that of an adult.

(*j*) No. Experience shows that this object, quite laudable in itself, is frustrated by the type of agents employed in carrying it out. An excess of zeal defeats its own end, and in the hands of the present-day agents of the agitation, enthusiasm for a cause soon degenerates into tyranny and terrorism. More frequently than not, the people are judged from a wrong angle of vision. We are in want of personnel of the right stamp for the temperance propaganda. At present politics is too much mixed with temperance. Unless the latter divorces itself from the former, the movement stands self-condemned.

(*k*) The present restrictions on country liquor and drugs are adequate. These restrictions should in equity apply to foreign liquors also.

11. Not until the franchise is extended and, for the matter of that, people are educated. At present education is confined mainly to the upper classes who form the bulk of the non-drinking population in India. This being the case, the exercise of local option by such persons would be vitiated by religious intolerance. If local option were restricted to representatives of drinking classes only, I have no objection to urge against it. But as matters stand at present, there are very few educated persons among the classes of people who resort to drink and hence it is not possible to have a local body of the kind contemplated in every taluka. In course of time and with the march of education, this will become possible.

12. It is an unworkable proposition. The local bodies mainly consist of individuals drawn from the non-drinking classes. They are in the nature of things unqualified to determine what are the minimum needs of the drinking public. They are unqualified, from the social isolation in which these two sections of the population live, move and have their being. For the reasons for which a Hindu does not deem it worth while to go to a Mahomedan to seek enlightenment on the religious principles, manners and customs of the followers of Islam, or *vice versa*, it is too much to expect local bodies constituted as at present, to form a correct judgment in the matter of the number, location, etc, of liquor shops in their respective areas. Another matter for consideration is that there is a grave danger of diversity of practice by different local bodies. One body may decide to curtail days and hours for sale, another may decide total prohibition, a third may be influenced into not putting any restriction on drink. Such different policies may be adopted by different bodies in the same district. The result would be chaos. It is useless to accept the principle of the exercise of local option and at the same time not to bring it into practice for fear of creating an atmosphere such as is described above. The wisest course would be to leave alone the question of investing local bodies with powers such as are contemplated in this question, until it becomes possible to summon competent local bodies for the purpose. At present such a movement is foredoomed to failure.

13. No. Because it is either represented in certain cases by interested parties or by persons religiously prohibited from drinking. The Committee should include three members having no concern with the liquor trade and elected by the drinking classes from among themselves and two Government officials. Each taluka should have its advisory committee and should confine its recommendations to the location and number of shops.

14. With 16 years' experience at my back as an Honorary Magistrate in the Satara District, I can say that there is no crime on any scale worth noticing attributable to drink, exceptional cases being left out of account. Nor as a business man have I come across any instances in which drink has shown any deteriorating effect on the output of work. Very few persons drink during day-time when they have work to do. With a few a small doze of alcohol is a stimulant for good work. For one thing, it may be pointed out with great effect that nowhere in the world is drink more prevalent than in Europe. On the other hand nowhere in the world are there people found in such large numbers who are prohibited by religion and instinct from drinking as in India. But it is very well known that Europe is the home of inventions, discoveries, advanced science, literature and art, complex machinery and manufactures of all kinds. If it were possible for drink to have any effect on the output of work, the result would be quite the reverse. All the sobriety, philosophy and taciturnity of Indians have not been able to give birth to a single discovery. They could not have been what they are, *viz*, better than their ancestors centuries ago but for western influence and association.

15. Since I advocate reduction of duty and cheapening of liquor, it becomes necessary to propose reduction in expenditure. Our administration is most costly. Much would be done to effect economy in expenditure. All Departments of Government are full of superfluous appointments and receive grants on lavish scales. Allowances to officers in various shapes require drastic curtailment.

16. Opium and hemp drugs have a greater deleterious physiological effect than alcohol. An individual addicted to the former cannot shake it off in his lifetime whereas one can divest himself of the habit of drink by the exercise of a little self-control. Any steps in the direction of putting opium and hemp drugs beyond the reach of the future generation would therefore be welcome. Gradual reduction in the quantity offered for sale with a view to complete extinction may be tried.

17. The custom is prevalent among the lower labouring classes whose women are obliged to work to eke out the limited means of the family. Occasional deaths due to neglect do occur, but they are too rare to call for notice. Since there is a number of other causes which are responsible in a greater degree to mortality among infants, they require as much or even greater attention than the one under consideration. The best course is to put opium beyond the reach of the poor.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Khan Bahadur COOPER replied to the President :—"Drinking as such existed in India even in pre-British days.

"I consides that drinking in moderation is desirable in some cases and should be allowed to continue. I consider that the present state of affairs is satisfactory so far as the drink problem is concerned.

"I have some experience of the City of Bombay. Though I had never been in the city with a view to make any regular enquiry, still I think I can express my opinion on the conditions prevailing there. The labouring classes in the City of Bombay do need drink to remove the fatigue of their toil during day time. A greater number of the Bombay population comes from the Ratnagiri and Satara Districts. The Committee will find that only the Ghatees who come from the Satara District can lift cotton bales in the docks and big stones where new constructions of buildings are going on in Bombay. After a hard day's toil, they do need in the evening some kind of drink to remove their sense of fatigue and it does them no harm. In our own place Ghisadees and Wadars certainly take drink in the evening and it does them no harm. On the other hand they need it. Physically, they are all right. It is my general impression that the present consumption of liquor is less than what it was before. I am of opinion that the evil of drink is decreasing. Since they started the Abkari policy in 1876, Government have been saying that they are raising the prices of liquor with a view to removing the drink habit from amongst the people. The rising cost of living is attributable to this heavy tax. Although consumption has been brought under check by these measures, the drain on the people's pocket has been out of proportion.

"I have not taken any medical advice as to whether alcohol does any real harm to the body.

"I am for education and not for prohibition first. Prohibition will come of itself. Education will slowly bring about these results. I would put elementary education in the forefront.

"Inferior foreign liquors are at times sold at cheaper rates even than country liquor. There are different proofs of country liquors in different localities—30, 40 or 60 U. P. A bottle of country liquor costs from Rs. 2 to 3. A bottle of cheap foreign liquor costs from Rs. 4 to 5. Foreign liquor is 25 U. P. Some measures are most certainly required to be taken to make good country and foreign liquors available.

"There are two shops in the Satara City ; previous to 1910 there were six shops. There is one foreign liquor shop in the City. There has not been much increase in the sale of foreign liquors during the last 10 years. The *per capita* consumption of liquor in rural areas in the district of Satara is on the whole one dram per year. So far as the rural areas are concerned there is not much drunkenness. Since 1st April 1922 the liquor shops at Panchgani and Mahableshwar have been entirely closed. The authentic figures of the sale of foreign liquor for April 1921 show that there is more than 100 per cent. increase. The sale of foreign liquor at the Mahableshwar shop was 34 dozen bottles in 1921 and 88 dozen bottles in 1922. Last year the sale of imported foreign liquor amounted to 18 dozen bottles. Drinks of fresh toddy and shindi are nutritious as well as condusive to health. If toddy remains for five or six hours it gets fermented. It is taken by the lower classes for intoxication. The toddy sold is generally adulterated. It is usually impossible to get fresh and pure toddy under the prevailing conditions. You can get unadulterated and unfermented toddy only under a toddy tree.

"If local option were restricted to representatives of the drinking classes only, I have no objection to urge against it. All drinking communities must have a right to vote. The exercise of local option by non-drinking communities, such as Brahmins, etc., will be vitiated by religious intolerance. I would like to extend the right to vote to drinkers and the drinking communities from whom a large portion of drink consumers are derived. If the right to vote be given to the general populace, they will interfere with the right of drinkers who are in the minority. I find that drinkers are mostly uneducated. The bad effects of drink are in existence because of want of education among the drinking classes. Education alone can control the consumption of liquor here. Every one, whether educated or uneducated, understands the evil of drink. People are alive to the bad effects of drink irrespective of education and non-drinkers should have the right to vote along with drinkers from the communities which have no religious scruples against drink."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" Immediate prohibition will not be possible by a stroke of the pen."

To Dr. Patil :—A moderate drinker is not a prey to the craving of alcohol. An opium-eater satiates his cravings for opium with opium."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Very few persons are hard drinkers. A moderate drinker never goes beyond his usual limit. It is no exaggeration to say that some people visit liquor shops in secrecy. It is not desirable to have shops in slums or by-lanes. They must be in prominent places. The age limit should be 21."

To Mr. Mehta :—" I do not think that people are spending so much on drink as to leave nothing for their family."

No. 39.

REPLIES (IN MARATHI) OF MR. ANANT GOVIND REDE, PRESIDENT, TALEGAON DABHADA MUNICIPALITY.

1. (*a*) Pensioner; for the last 4 or 5 years I am working as President, Talegaon Dabhada Municipality.

(*b*) Formerly, while serving in the collector's office, I had occasion to inspect Abkari (liquor) shops and hence have an opportunity to think over the subject from time to time.

(*c*) While the liquor-shops at Talegaon Dabhada were being picketed, I had, with the members of the municipality, several opportunities of watching how it was being done. I have also on several occasions seen drunkards rolling in gutters, while, at other times, I have seen some of them beating their wives and children. The result was that I was led to think on the most vital subject "liquor and the evil effects arising from drinking the same."

2. If the principles stated to be underlying the Abkari policy of the Government of India are considered from all points of view, they will not be found to be conducive to the welfare of the masses and hence they should be given up. It appears that the Government of India think that good liquor taken in a limited quantity is not only not injurious to health but on the contrary beneficial to it; and that it is the duty of the Government to minister to the wants of those who are temperate in drinking. But having regard to the daily new discoveries in science in the world, good liquor even in a very small quantity is found not only injurious to the human being but it affects the lever, the heart, the nerves and other parts, thereby courting of our own accord dangerous diseases, like cancer, pneumonia and consumption. The International Congress on Tuberculosis assembled at Paris in 1905 passed a resolution that liquor and consumption being very closely connected, all should with one accord exert their utmost to destroy the drink evil. It is not at all possible that experts in the Medical Department of the Government of India might not have noticed this important resolution and the daily new discoveries in the field of science regarding liquor. As a matter of fact, Government themselves ought to have long ago prohibited such a poisonous drink; but not only do they not do so but feel themselves satisfied in taking their stand on the lame excuse that they are ministering to the needs of those only who desire to use the intoxicants in a limited quantity. If the drinking habit is once encouraged, it is well-nigh impossible to get rid of it. By this indirect encouragement to drink wine, though it be in a very small quantity, the mind and the body of the drunkard are affected, with the result that Government are simply committing the sin of undermining the natural strength of man by which he enjoyed life's natural pleasures. The ends which both the Government and the people have in view are as poles as under. Government declares that the question of revenue from liquor is of secondary importance; but every year that revenue goes on increasing. In short, from the religious, moral, social, and medicinal points of view, limited, drink is injurious and, therefore, needs to be given up. Excessive drinking, instead of being checked, is on the increase. Evil effects, rather than beneficial ones, are apparent. The policy of Government has not at all put an effective check on intemperance; the vice is such that, if it once takes root, it will not be possible to get rid of it till the man is ruined materially and physically (*lit:* his house and body are reduced to ashes).

3. From the religious, social and moral points of view I am firmly of opinion that the principle followed by Government is fundmentally ruinous in the extreme, hence it is beneficial and desirable to adopt the principle of total prohibition. No other changes in the present policy willl be of any avail.

4. Total prohibition is necessary on the following grounds :—

(1) Discoveries in medical science prove that spirit is poisonous.

(2) The nerves become benumbed and the intellect becomes dull and this leads to mental and bodily ruin and ultimately the man becomes disabled for ever.

(3) Being addicted to drinking spirituous liquors, several families and castes have been lost to history. That such classes of people should be wiped out of existence is extremely ruinous from the point of view of national well-being.

(4) Drinking is a great sin from the religious point of view, and to disobey religious commandments is to commit a great sin.

(5) Morality being undermined, the tendency to commit crimes becomes stimulated, followed by inattention to work.

Total prohibition is not impossible, provided there is a strong desire to do so and indefatigable efforts are heartily undertaken. If we consider the expression "total prohibition" in its mere abstract sense, it is impossible to prohibit not only drink, but any other evil or matter; but here we are not concerned with the abstract sense. It is not that this prohibition will be carried out suddenly and immediately. It is true that some time will be required, but we firmly

believe that by strenuous exertions drink can be totally prohibited within 4 or 5 years by adopting the following measures :—

(*a*) In the first year, the sale of liquor should be reduced by 50 per cent. At present, this has been reduced by 5 to 10 per cent. In the second year, this sale should be further reduced to 30 per cent. of the sale for the first year. In this way the percentage of reduction should be heavy in the beginning and should be considerably low towards the closing years. In this way, immediate and salutary effect will be apparent by the end of the first year.

(*b*) The price of liquor should be exorbitant.

(*c*) The number of liquor shops should be considerably reduced.

(*d*) Arrangement should be made for supplying liquor only once a week, and that too in a very small quantity. The shop should be allowed to be kept open for 3 hours only.

(*e*) Foreign liquor should be heavily taxed.

(*f*) Drinking liquor in the shop itself should be regulated. No liquor should be allowed to be taken home. It should be made an offence under law to take liquor home or to be in possession of the same (the liquor contractor being exempted) and the same offence should be made severely punishable.

(*g*) Sincere preachers free from any vice should be employed to persuade people to give up the drink habit and for this purpose magic lanterns, handbills and other means should be often and often made use of.

(*h*) Wherever there are liquor shops, the local committees should have power to inspect the same ; and if the recommendations of the committee are not attended to, the same committee should have power severely to fine the contractor. Thus, there will be a great check on the sale of liquor.

5. (*a*) Inspite of the strict supervision of Government stray offences of illicit distillation of liquor are perhaps being committed even now. At present, the law provides very mild punishment for such offences. At times the accused is let off on a fine of Rs. 5 or 10. The maximum punishment of 6 months imprisonment is also very meagre. The more severe such punishment, the more powerful will be the check.

(*b*) Once the Imperial Government fully accepts the proposition that drinking liquor is like drinking poison and that it ruins the nation, it will require no time to persuade the Indian states to take suitable action. Even to-day liquor is totally prohibited in some Indian States. Similar efforts are being made also in America. If a man tries to smuggle arms from Indian States or Portuguese territory, the Government of India is competent to confiscate them ; on the same principle, why should there be any difficulty in preventing liquor from being brought into British territory ? Liquor is even more dangerous than arms. Accordingly, it being to the interest of the people that such a dangerous weapon (as liquor) should be controlled, Government should adopt whatever severe measures they can.

(*c*) Prohibition of liquor will cause some little discontent among the tribes like Bhils, Ramoshis, Kaikadis, etc. But there is no reason to take this discontent seriously into account. Because, after some time these very people, realising the advantages resulting from the prohibition of liquor, will but bless the Government of India. If inspite of the people's principal demand that taxes should not be increased, Government without paying any heed to popular discontent can increase the same, there is no reason why the Imperial Government need at all hesitate, on the lame pretext lest discontent be caused among some tribes, when the people themselves are demanding the salutary reform of liquor prohibition.

(*d*) There will be no need. In 1916, the Total Prohibition Law being passed in Ontario Canada, offences decreased and thus very little work was left for the police. In view of this, marked result, it does not seem likely that a larger staff will have to be maintained. By constant preaching, the inclination to take to bad habits will of itself disappear.

(*e*) It will have a desirable effect if the people are from time to time kept informed of other evil things like wine.

6. We are distinctly of opinion that though the present generation may not be fully benefited, the future one will not fail surely to reap the benefit.

7. Answered under question 4.

8. Yes.

9, 10 and 11. Answered already.

12. The chief end in view being total prohibition within 4 or 5 years, it will be advantageous to empower responsible institutions like municipalities, local boards, etc., for 4 or 5 years. Raising the moral tone of the people is more beneficial to the nation, than increasing the revenue. It is necessary that the above-mentioned institutions should be made to pay more attention to this aspect of the question. Because Government themselves say that the question of revenue is totally of a secondary nature.

13. Such is not the case at all ; it is necessary to increase the proportion of elected members ; every question should be decided in accordance with their opinion.

14. Yes, crimes increase and work diminishes.

15. The question how to make up the revenue lost by resorting to permanent total prohibition is an important one. But if all matters concerning the administration are shaped here, as is being done in England, according to the people's will, then, no time will be required to make the deficit of three to four crores. With the decrease in crimes there is bound to be some saving in the present yearly expenditure on the Police and Military Departments. With a strong physique maintained, the people, finding all other measures failing, will of themselves in the end gladly consent to being taxed a little more. One may at times even submit to monetary loss in preference to human loss leading to national loss; but to submit to human loss in order to save monetary loss is the blackest stigma on the character of the nation, which stands foremost among other nations.

16. No.

17. It is a custom prevalent among all communities to administer opium in a very small quantity to little children only, but it is seldom heard that this has proved fatal to them.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. REDE replied to the President :—" The population of Talegaon Dabhada is 3,273. There is only one country liquor shop in the municipality. There is no foreign liquor shop. There was at first one foreign liquor shop, but for the last five or six months when picketing was going on, it has been closed. There was a petition for closing this shop which was forwarded through the municipality, but the Collector replied that he could not do so in the interests of the public. Another attempt was made when an application was sent signed by seven hundred people for closing the shop. The application was read to them and then it was signed by them. There will be no discontent among the people if this shop is finally closed. Some people will at first be discontented if the present liquor shop is also closed, but they will in the end be satisfied. The drinking class will not take any objection if Government will stop this shop too. During the picketing time of 8 months there was complete prohibition. Some people were drinking secretly. If a drunkard is requested and persuaded he may leave off his habit of drinking. I have not done picketing work, but I have seen people picketing.

" I think local option will be of great use, even drunkards will vote against drink.

" I am for total prohibition. It is feasible within five years.

" I am against the ' off ' shop system.

" Lectures and magic lanterns are also of great use. Exertions should be made to curtail the Excise Department completely within five years."

To Dr. Patil :—" People are not trying to have liquor from any other source. Liquor shops should not be kept on prominent places.

" Liquor shops should be open between 5 and 7 p.m. and should be closed on holidays and pay days.

" Twenty-two should be the age limit."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" There is no risk in reverting to the old order of things, so far as the staff arrangement is concerned."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" There were three liquor shops in the District, *namely*, those at :— Lonavala, Khadkale and Talegaon.

" There should be total prohibition at the end of five years."

To Mr. Mehta :—" I would prefer prohibition by legislation."

To Mr. Baker :—" There is no possibility of illicit distillation as there are no mhowra flowers available in the vicinity of Talegaon."

No. 40.

REPLIES OF MR. M. V. KATHAVATE, PRESIDENT, WAI MUNICIPALITY.

1. I am a Retired First Class Sub-judge, having worked as Sub-judge in Ahmednagar, Khandesh, Thana and Ratnagiri Districts, for about 29 years. I am at present President of the Wai Municipality and President of the Wai Taluka Local Board, and Chairman of the Veterinary Dispensary, Wai, and member of the District Local Board, Satara. I also worked as Honorary First Class Magistrate, Wai. I had opportunities of observing the customs of the Bhils in Khandesh, the Kolis of Thana, the Weavers of Ahmednagar and the Chammars of Wai—classes which are very much given to drinking. But I may at once say that I have not studied the excise question.

2. (*a*) It humbly appears to me that the policy, laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, is not one which a national Government of India, *i.e.*, one which knows and appropriates the soul of the people, would have adopted. That policy is based upon the habits of the people of the West, who are given to drink, from the highest to the lowest. It says that the Government of India have no desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation; this is regarded by them as outside the duty of Government and it is necessary in their opinion to make due provision for the needs of such persons. I ask myself what an Asoka, a Harsha or Kumarpal of Gujarat of ancient days, or an Akbar or a Maharaja of Kashmir of modern times, would have done, if it had come to his notice that his subjects were becoming drunkards. We learn from the Kalinga Edicts, to quote from the late Mr. Vincent Smith's History of India, third edition, page 180, that "All the officers of State, whom, in modern phraseology, we may call Lieutenant-Governors, Commissioners and District Magistrates, were commended to make use of opportunities during their periodical tours for convoking assemblies of the lieges, and instructing them in the whole duty of man. Certain days in the year were particularly set apart for this duty, and the officials were directed to perform it in addition to their ordinary work." The Chinese traveller Fa-hien, who travelled some 500 miles from the Indus to Mathura on the Jumna, writes, 'Throughout the country no one kills any living thing, *or drinks wine*, or eats onions or garlic, etc., (page 297).

I am humbly of opinion that if at the very beginning of the British administration, the fact had been brought to the notice of Government that India was not a country like England given to drink, that a very small minority of the people only were habitul drunkards, and that it was the duty of Government to adopt means to prevent the growth of this habit, legislation of a different character would have been adopted, and the evil would not have assumed the present dimensions. Revenue from this source would not have risen. That is my humble view of the policy of 1905.

(*b*) I don't know and have not studied figures. But I observe that intemperance has not decreased, that on the contrary it has increased among the working classes, the mill-hands, the Chammars and even among the cultivating classes. It is, positively painful to observe every evening otherwise good people acting like brutes under the influence of liquor. One cannot but feel humiliated when one looks at the liquor shop in Murray Street at Mahableshwar (now abolished I am told), the *guttas* at Ahmednagar, Poona and other places, and the scenes that take place there. These surely do not show that intemperance has decreased.

3. But the practical question is what change of policy can be adopted at this stage? I would answer that the same policy which was adopted in stopping the opium trade with China. That too was I believe an important source of revenue. But public opinion in England was too strong to be ignored. And the result was that the opium trade disappeared, and the deficit caused by the abolition of that source of revenue has been fully met.

Let the habit of drink be looked upon as worse than plague, and no sacrifice would be considered too great for its abolition. Let the idea be got rid of that it is any body's right to drink and that Government is bound to protect that right. Let the Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, Commissioners, Collectors and Mamlatdars call together meetings, such as were called when recruits were required for the great War, such as were called by Asoka to explain to the people their duties, and drink will disappear in a short time.

4. Yes, I am in favour of total prohibition, because from what I have read in books like Personal Hygiene (I forget the exact name) I have got the impression that alcohol in even small quantities not only is not useful, but is positively mischievous, because I consider that in very many cases moderation is not maintained, that generally excess is the result, and that the latter leads to the brutalisation of the drunkards, that it starves families, spoils children and leads to serious crime. I would suggest that a notice be given to the purchasers of shops of liquor in non-Bhil and non-Koli districts that liquor shops would be closed in one year.

Prohibition may not be introduced immediately in Bhil and Koli districts of Khandesh and Thana.

5. (*a*) See (*d*).

(*b*) Indian States too will not be disinclined to stop the drink habit. They may be expected to lend a helping hand in this matter. As to Portuguese territory, ordinary Customs arrangements will be sufficient.

(*c*) The classes of Bhils and Kolis will no doubt be discontented in the beginning. In their case weak liquor may for some time be given. And zealous propaganda work will in due course have effect upon them.

(*d*) Some establishment may be required for some time to prevent illicit distillation. But I am not prepared to give any exact details. I do not think there will be much illicit manufacture of liquor. Special establishment, however, may be engaged in some places.

(*e*) Opium is one of the drugs which cannot be wholly stopped, for it has medicinal qualities. But the precautions that are now taken and which are found sufficiently efficacious in practice may be continued.

6. The argument that prohibition will have large influence on the next generation, even if it is not effective in the present, has much force in it.

7. In addition to prohibitive legislation, there should be effective propaganda by means of lectures, cinema shows, magic lantern slides, and peaceful picketing, if liquor shops are not entirely closed. There should also be cheap harmless substitutes, such as sugar-cane-juice, even tea, coffee and cocoa. These, though not quite harmless, are not so bad as liquor; cheap places of amusement may also be provided.

8. I would not prohibit the use of harmless drink, such as toddy and shindi.

9. The means suggested in no. 10 may be adopted till absolute prohibition becomes feasible.

10. I would add to all the means enumerated in this question propaganda by means of lectures, broadcast leaflets, magic lantern slides, cinemas, lessons in school books, peaceful picketing by responsible and respectable persons.

11. Yes, municipalities, local boards, village panchayets should be given a voice in opening and closing liquor shops and the opinion of the street or gully be also ascertained.

12. These local bodies may, if necessary, be well asked to pay nominal tributes for this right. It is really a right which is inherent in them, but they may be asked to contribute something by way of subvention to Government in their financial difficulty.

13. I have no personal knowledge about those Advisory Committees. But they don't appear to be existing in all places where there are *guttas*. They should be established in all such places and they should have a predominant voice in matters such as location of shops, hours of sale, holidays, the way in which liquor is to be sold, the quantity of the liquor, the age and sex of the customer.

14. The evil of drink certainly leads to crime; moderation can scarcely be maintained by people of the lower classes. Their wives and children suffer from the drinking habits of the worker, as the latter spends a large amount of his earnings in drink and very often beats them and otherwise ill-treats them. Drink, I understand, undermines health and work must thereby suffer.

15. I do not feel myself competent to suggest sources of revenue to make up the deficit that must be caused by total or partial prohibition. All that I can say is that drink should be abolished at any cost, even if it be necessary for some time to starve some of the departments of administration and keep just enough to maintain law and order (these, of course, it is absolutely necessary to maintain). Productive Departments only should be kept up in addition to Education and Sanitation, Post, etc. Administration of justice should be made least costly. Arbitration should be more actively encouraged. State expenses, durbars, etc., should for some time be largely curtailed. But, as said above, this is not a matter on which I can offer any useful suggestion.

16. Opium and hemp drugs should be treated like liquor. But as said above, opium should be dealt with in a somewhat different manner.

17. The custom of giving opium to children prevails to a large extent. But I do not think that it contributes to any appreciable extent to a larger death rate among children.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KATHAVATE replied to the President.—"I have served in Amalner and Jalgaon. The Bhils drink on marriage occasions. The weaving population of Sangamner is addicted to drinking to a very great extent. The problem of drink is very serious and of a great magnitude in industrial cities rather than in rural tracts. I find that the Chammars are also very much addicted to drinking.

"I am in favour of total prohibition being brought into effect as soon as possible. Drinking in moderation even ought to be interferred with by Government. Alcohol even in small quantities not only is not useful, but is positively mischievous, because I consider that in very many cases moderation is not maintained. I think that both Government and the people should make a start on this question of drink. It is for Government to step in and the people will help Government. Those who are responsible for the excise policy of Government make it impossible to bring about reduction. Government should not make much of the discontent of the people if drink is stopped. Temperance Associations should be given help. Picketing, lectures, cinemas, exercises in school books and other educational activities to impart instructions on the drink evil should be adopted. Picketing will be very successful if it be undertaken by responsible and respectable persons. In Wai for five or six months there was perceptible decrease in drink. Magistrates and other officers were also satisfied with the way in which it was carried out. There was nothing to complain. I think that if school-book curriculum impressed upon the minds of children the bad effects of alcohol, it would be of great use.

"If total prohibition is not found feasible, local option should be adopted. I am in favour of local option only if total prohibition is not feasible. I will not confine the right of local option to drunkards.

"I will certainly go in for court fees on the Original Side of the High Court. Benches of Sub-Judges should be established to try land and other important cases, and appeals against their decisions should be abolished so that people's money will be saved, and appellate courts could be reduced in number."

To Mr. Baker :—"Even if, as you say, arbitration work was not found satisfactory, now that there is a great spread of education and honorary and reliable workers can be found, there are chances that it will prove satisfactory."

To Mr. Madon :—"There were three liquor shops in Wai. Two have since been closed. They were closed on the representation of the public opinion of Satara and Wai."

To Dr. Patil :—"I will not prohibit the use of harmless drink such as toddy and shindi. Unfermented and unadulterated toddy is not at all harmful. Fresh toddy should be supplied under the trees. Liquor shops should be closed on holidays, and in the evening at 8 p.m. Mere closing of shops will not do, because there are persons who give drink to the customers even though the shops are closed. Young boys should not be allowed in liquor shops. Eighteen should be the age limit."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Drinking was not very common among Indians in ancient times."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"If I had to choose I would go in for primary education first and then for prohibition of liquor, if funds are quite limited."

To Mr. Mehta :—"I am of opinion that picketing by respectable persons will be effective. I cannot give any fixed period for carrying out the picketing. I think it should be continued until the last man stops drinking. The majority of people will be willing to vote for total prohibition."

## No. 41.

### Replies of Mr. P. V. DOMINGO, District Deputy Collector, Satara.

1. I am District Deputy Collector, Satara. I have served in the Poona, Ahmednagar, West Khandesh Districts, and as Deputy Collector of Bombay for eight months. I count over twenty years of service, and I am myself an occasional drinker.

2. The Government of India are quite correct.

3. The present policy followed is quite all right, although it may cause some hardship to the drinking population.

4. Total prohibition is impossible.

5. (*a*) A detective staff where there has been clear evidence hitherto of illicit distillation, and severe fines when offences are detected, are necessary. There will not be illicit distillation hereafter where hitherto there has been not, notably in the greater part of the Deccan.

(*b*) Keep a detective staff well paid.

(*c*) Progress should be made gradually.

(*d*) Please see answers to (*a*) and (*b*).

(*e*) Counter attractions like tea-shops should be established and educative propaganda in favour of health and temperance in the shape of lectures, magic lanterns, etc., should be vigorously carried on by the Sanitary Department of Government and by non-officials.

6. This is nonsense. The world's morality is getting worse day by day compared to previous generations. Prohibition can play very little part in human nature. If that were not so, the Brahmins and the Mahomedans who don't drink would have been saints to-day and crime would have been entirely absent in them.

7. I do not admit complete prohibition.

8. Fermented liquors such as toddy, etc., should not be controlled more than they are now.

9. The present system which the Government of Bombay intend introducing during the current year will answer the purpose.

10. The same as above.

11. Local option should be exercised only by the drinking classes, such as Marathas, etc.

12. I am in favour of the suggestion, provided it is given effect to after five years. In the meantime, education must spread and people should realise their responsibilities.

13. Advisory committees are only useful to a limited extent.

14. Drink does contribute to an increase of crime and it does affect the output of work, when taken to excess, just as any other vice, such as debauchery, excessive smoking, *ganja*-smoking, etc.

15. The note on the financial situation does not disclose the amount now spent on the Excise establishment.

In my opinion great reductions in the staff are possible. There should be no more need for an Excise Commissioner, or the Deputy Commissioners or the Superintendents of Excise. The work of Excise administration should be handed over to the Collector of Bombay who has not got now full-time work as some of his departments are now transferred to the department of Industries. The Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents are absolutely unnecessary because they do nothing in the detection of illicit distillation. The work of Excise administration should be handed over to the Revenue Department just as it was before 1906. Besides several Inspectors, etc., could be reduced. One Inspector for each district ought to suffice. There is hardly illicit distillation in these days in many districts.

If, however, new taxation is necessary to make up the deficit after curtailing the establishment, I would suggest a flat rate of rupee one each on all English newspapers and eight annas on all vernacular newspapers published and sold in the Presidency. This tax would fall on all drinkers and non-drinkers and would amount to a fairly large income and could be collected direct from the presses. Anyone subscribing for more than one English and one vernacular paper should be allowed a refund of payments made. Details could be worked at a later stage.

16. No special remarks.

17. Agriculturists find it necessary to give opium to their children as it acts as a soporific. As one moving almost daily in the villages, I do not think that the practice has any bad effect on the children. On the other hand, evil effects, if any, are countermanded by their living in open air, simple food and plenty of milk supply, and their children look much healthier than the city children. I do not think the present practice should be disturbed as it would affect agricultural labour.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. DOMINGO replied to the President:—"I do not think that prohibition will have any material effect on the present generation or the next. I do not consider it at all practical as there is nothing to show that in India the non-drinking classes commit less crimes than the drinking classes. It would not be fair to draw rigid conclusions on this point without being in possession of very carefully prepared statistics. I think that local option should not be extended to non-drinking classes. I would leave this right to the drinking classes alone as otherwise the non-drinkers might make a political use of the privilege of local option. In Australia and America the average man understands what is a political question and what is a social question. Certainly, in America political considerations did not bring in prohibition; while in India most of the extremist newspapers are crying for prohibition ostensibly to cripple Government in its resources. If municipalities had the right of local option there would not be, seeing the tendency shown by them last year, a single shop in their areas.

"I have some experience of advisory committees. They are very anxious to get all the powers in their own hands and there is danger of their using their power to the detriment of liquor-shopkeepers. At present the officials in the committees hold the balance.

"I am not at all in favour of total prohibition.

"Advisory committees, if they consist of an electorate of, say, three-fourths of drinkers and one-fourth non-drinkers, might be successful. I consider that at least two-thirds of the voters must vote for closing down a liquor-shop, and at the place of voting no influence of any nature should be allowed to be brought on the voters.

"I consider that great economies can be made in the present Excise administration. What are known as Deputy Commissioners of Excise can be abolished as their appointments were made only six years back. Many of the places of Chief Inspectors of Excise can be abolished, as also places of Superintendents in districts where it is certain that there is no illicit distillation. In such districts the work of supervision could be entrusted to officers of the Revenue Department. But I deprecate immediate reduction of Excise staff where there is danger of illicit distillation.

"There is no parallel to the taxation on newspapers now proposed by me. I am not very much in favour of a tax on amusements. I am in favour of increasing local fund cess from one anna to two annas, but I fear any increase of revenue thus secured will have to be handed over to the local boards who are very much crippled for want of funds.

"The age limit at which liquor can be sold should be 18.

"There should be no control for the present on foreign liquor. I am aware that there are inferior sorts of foreign liquors. They are harmful. But the people are obliged to drink them, partly on account of fears of picketing at country liquor-shops and partly because the present sudden new policy of Government is very inconvenient to customers. If you increase the price of country liquor and ration it and restrict its possession and reduce the number of shops and close the available shops on Sundays and certain holidays, customers are driven to cheap foreign liquors. If country liquor is sold at a moderate rate and made available at reasonable places, the demand for cheap foreign liquor will not increase.

"There is considerable illicit distillation in certain parts of East Khandesh and West Khandesh Districts, and I submit herewith three statements* to show that consumption of liquor in shops has year by year decreased—while the number of cases of illicit distillation and illicit importation have steadily increased. These figures have been gathered from the official records."

To Mr. Baker:—"I am of opinion that reduction in the subordinate Excise establishment should not be made at a stroke, as otherwise it would be impossible to watch the results of the measures the Excise Committee would propose. It is true that I had recommended in my written answers more drastic reduction in the Excise establishment but after my transfer to Jalgaon for some days and after discussing excise matters of establishment, I consider that the present staff is necessary to watch illicit distillation."

To Mr. Madon:—"Illicit distillation is going on in several talukas of the East Khandesh District. There is a very great demand for mhowra flowers, for instance in Jamner and Chalisgaon Talukas, in areas which border on the Nizam's territory and the Vanjaras pay, I am told, prohibitive price for them. It is very easy to have illicit distillation in such areas as detection is difficult and risky."

To Dr. Patil:—"I am personally against the use of fermented toddy but difficulties of customers are increased and they are forced to drink fermented toddy when pure toddy is not available. It must be remembered that toddy has to be transported from distant areas to toddy shops and the toddy trees are mostly owned by private people and if they put up their terms

* Printed below.

unduly high the toddy licensees cannot get their trees. Besides, if the owner of toddy trees is a prohibitionist, it is very likely that he will refuse to rent his trees. Owing to cheapness many people prefer to drink fermented toddy rather than liquor. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I think it is the duty of Government to regulate the drink problem and to afford adequate facilities to drinkers. No civilized Government, in my opinion, has a right to dictate to its people as to what they should eat and drink. Every man has his free will and, when it is abused, Government can punish him. If Government would not control the drink traffic, there would be great abuses. If Government were hankering after the revenue only, there should have been a liquor-shop in every village. On the other hand, Government have steadily followed the policy of temperance, thus giving away a large revenue. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" In West Khandesh people distil illicit liquor freely. People drink there in large quantities. In Wai Division, Satara District, of which I was in charge till recently I heard of no cases of illicit distillation. "

To Mr. Mehta :—" Excessive drinking makes a drunkard a slave of drinking ; but there is no reason why the liberty of free people should be controlled. We are at present punishing the man who abuses his liberty. Drink is a social evil and therefore only social agencies should work to attain temperance among the people. "

*Statement, produced by Mr. Domingo, showing (1) consumption of country spirit in proof gallons and (2) the rate of consumption per head of population in the East Khandesh District.*

| Year. | Consumption of country spirit in proof gallons. | Rate per head of population. | Population. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Gallons. | Drams. | |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 2,19,206 | 10·2 | 10,35,005 |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 2,08,097 | 9·6 | 10,34,886 |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 1,91,651 | 8·9 | ,, |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 1,73,814 | 8·06 | ,, |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 1,40,982 | 6·5 | ,, |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 1,18,882 | 5·5 | ,, |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 1,61,793 | 7·5 | ,, |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 1,53,640 | 7·1 | ,, |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 1,32,162 | 6·1 | ,, |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 1,49,531 | 6·9 | ,, |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 1,00,738 | 4·5 | 10,75,028 |

*Statement, produced by Mr. Domingo, showing consumption of country spirit in large towns of the East Khandesh District.*

| Year. | Jalgaon. | | Bhusawal. | | Population. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total consumption. | Rate per head. | Total consumption. | Rate per head. | Jalgaon Town. | Bhusawal Town. |
| | Gallons. | Drams. | Gallons. | Drams. | | |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 6,698 | 19·8 | 12,739 | 37·4 | 16,259 | 16,363 |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 7,709 | 20·7 | 13,414 | 35·2 | 17,867 | 18,312 |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 7,241 | 19·5 | 12,390 | 32·5 | ,, | ,, |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 5,404 | 14·5 | 6,351 | 16·6 | ,, | ,, |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 7,831 | 21·04 | 10,764 | 28·2 | ,, | ,, |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 5,361 | 14·4 | 7,330 | 19·2 | ,, | ,, |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 5,689 | 15·3 | 12,058 | 31·6 | ,, | ,, |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 8,058 | 21·6 | 12,923 | 33·9 | ,, | ,, |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 6,190 | 16·6 | 10,135 | 26·6 | ,, | ,, |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 5,651 | 15·2 | 9,768 | 25·6 | ,, | ,, |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 3,655 | 7·5 | 8,571 | 16·4 | 23,324 | 25,071 |

*Statement, produced by Mr. Domingo, regarding offences relating to*

| Year. | Illicit distillation of country liquor. | Illicit importation of country liquor. | Total number of shops licensed to sell country liquor. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1910-11 .. .. .. | 11 | 28 | 144 |
| 1911-12 .. .. .. | 9 | 3 | 134 |
| 1912-13 .. .. .. | 7 | 12 | 131 |
| 1913-14 .. .. .. | 12 | 19 | 122 |
| 1914-15 .. .. .. | 12 | 24 | 117 |
| 1915-16 .. .. .. | 59 | 33 | 115 |
| 1916-17 .. .. .. | 26 | 33 | 111 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. | 37 | 4 | 112 |
| 1918-19 .. .. .. | 29 | 0 | 112 |
| 1919-20 .. .. .. | 63 | 0 | 112 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. | 69 | 38 | 112 |

No. 42.

REPLIES OF MAJOR A. THORNE, CANTONMENT MAGISTRATE, POONA.

1. Cantonment Magistrate. Examined the question in the Punjab and started beer shops in opposition to the spirit shops but was defeated by the Excise regulations.

2. (*a*) Generally approved.

(*b*) The result is bad as there is no substitute for spirit and in my experience the inferior Excise officials hinder the provision of substitutes.

3. Foreign spirits should not be raised to such a price as to sell at twice the price of whiskey, gin, etc., produced in India, as it is driving people to drink these Indian spirits, which are in most cases new and raw spirits. If it is necessary to tax foreign spirits to this extent, then Indian spirits should be taxed in proportion.

The tax on Indian beers should be very low indeed; to allow beer shops to replace country liquor shops. In places known to me it is quite possible to substitute beer shops for spirit shops and absolutely prohibit the sale of country spirit.

4. By local veto as regards country spirit only; in municipal areas only, by the substitution of beer shops.

5. (*a*) Cannot be met.

(*b*) Do.

(*c*) Substitute beer for the poor and the rich can buy from the wine merchant.

(*d*) No remarks.

(*e*) Do.

6. Does not apply in India as prohibition could never be effective.

As in Turkey, which has a Muslim Government, everyone can and would distil what spirit he wanted, it is quite simple, anyone can do it, in fact, you will find Europeans doing it if you raise the foreign spirit duties any higher.

Your only plan is to change the habits of the people and you will have to be careful as they are ready to take to drugs now.

The idea of the capitalist that he will get more work out of his labour on prohibition is futile, I think, labour in this country is very fluid and can move on if it does not like the conditions.

7. No.

Substitution of less dangerous drinks over the widest possible area at comparatively cheap prices and sold under "beer garden" conditions with "on" licenses, till they get so popular that the habit of drinking expensive spirit dies out among the poorer classes. A Government monopoly of breweries would bring in revenue and the manufacture of country spirit might be dropped altogether, except by private enterprise to compete with imported spirit sold at a little higher price.

8. I think that you cannot without making every citizen a potential criminal, and at present the average citizen looks upon the Police as the enemy; it is very different in England.

9. I have given my opinion before.

10. None. My ideas are different.

11. Yes, but only if substitutes for country liquor be provided and only in municipal areas where the people are supposed to be represented, though as a matter of fact they are not. I do not approve of the Brahmin legislating as to what the sweeper shall do, till the sweeper is represented on the legislating bodies.

12. No, as before. Such bodies often only represent themselves and the local money lenders, who disapprove of their debtors having any money to spend elsewhere, while the debtor's only way of forgetting the money lender is by drinking.

13. No. Too many cranks on them, being the only people who take any interest in the subject, who are not interested in the trade and therefore unable to speak.

The drinking classes are not represented; usually only castes and religions which are supposed not to drink at all, even if they do; so you only get pious platitudes and no reasoned opinions. Some members are suspected of blackmailing the shop keepers, and getting shops closed if the shop keepers refuse to pay. They are worthless, if not evil institutions.

14. In my experience as a magistrate I have no experience of crime due to drink, except that manufactured by picketers.

Crime due to drugs is fairly common.

If a man drinks spirits he does not work a full week. The lower classes meet together for a drink at intervals. If you substitute beer gardens, they meet and enjoy themselves and go to work next day. I have proved it in two places and any sensible employer of labour will tell you the same.

15. These measures would take time but in the end the revenue should be the same.

16. Only to be sold by licensed chemists and entered in a poison book, though this would not work in the parts of India where it is used by a large proportion of the population.

17. Very common among the poor and very common among the servants of the upper classes, who give it to their employers' children.

The death rate proves it ?

It should be an offence, *i.e.*, administering poison.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Major THORNE replied to the President :—" My experience is concerned with the Punjab. I started beer shops there in opposition to the spirit shops but was defeated by the Excise regulations. I would allow beer shops to replace country liquor shops. Beer is rather more expensive than country liquor. It has exhilarating influence. After a day's toil labourers do want a little wine.

" I am working as Cantonment Magistrate, Poona, for the last eight months.

" If two-thirds of the majority of voters in a particular locality will vote for removing a liquor shop in their area, the shop in that locality should be removed. Beer should be substituted for country liquor. This is applicable to municipal areas only. I would extend this right to vote to all adult males living in that locality.

" Private efforts will undoubtedly be of great use in weaning away illiterate people from the drink evil, if they are kept away from politics.

" Only one shop was reduced last year. I think that some exhilarating substitute for country spirit, in the form of beer, is necessary for the labouring classes. In France everybody drinks wine. I support the substitution of less dangerous drinks over the widest possible area at comparatively cheap prices and sold under " beer garden " conditions with " on " licenses, till they get so popular that the habit of drinking expensive spirit dies out among the poorer classes. I have little experience of the Advisory Committees. They do not work. The non-official members are all teetotallers and they want to shut up every liquor shop. Officials are moderate. Advisory Committees should take into consideration the wishes of the local municipality. People who drink should obviously be represented on the Advisory Committees."

To Mr. Baker :—" The country liquor referred to is that of the Punjab. It is very strong.

" My experience of Deccani Mussalman soldiers is that they do not drink much while with their regiments."

To Mr. Madon :—" The information to the effect that " some members are suspected of blackmailing the shopkeepers and getting shops closed if the shopkeepers refused to pay " has been given to me as a Magistrate, and I cannot give further details to the Committee in connection with it."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" Europeans may perhaps go in for distilling liquor if duties on foreign spirit are raised. Lots of money will have to be spent in keeping punitive police to prevent illicit distillation."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I do not think the principle of prohibition of all liquors can be applied without making every citizen a potential criminal, as at present the average citizen looks upon the Police as the enemy. In India everyone tries to avoid the police ; in England it is very different."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—" I am not in favour of investing local bodies, *e.g.*, municipalities and district or taluka local boards, with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. No municipality will be able to pay any part of the revenue that will be sacrificed by the exercise of such power in their areas."

To Mr. Mehta :—" I will not support picketing even by respectable persons. I do not approve of the Brahmin legislating as to what the sweeper shall do, till the sweeper is represented on the legislating bodies."

No. 43.

REPLIES OF Mr. D. S. OKA, B.A., LL.B., PLEADER, NASIK.

1. My profession is pleader. My opinions are based on general knowledge.

4. In certain hilly tracts, the inhabitants use distilled liquor as a medicine, such as in Peth in Nasik District. In such places they ought to be allowed to use it in moderate quantities and absolute prohibition can never be enforced. In other places the people use liquor as a luxury. They are only addicted to it and it is desirable that they give up the habit. But this cannot be achieved effectively by any legislation at present. Any legislation that may be passed shall have no lasting effect, unless the moral tendencies of the people addicted to drink have been improved. I am, therefore, not in favour of immediate prohibition.

7. Though I am not in favour of immediate prohibition, I think that complete cessation of consumption of distilled liquor, except in places where it may be necessary owing to the unhealthy climate, is an end to be desired and aimed at. The first thing to be done is to mould the moral tendencies of the people against its use. This is a thing to be done both by Government and by the people. Temperance associations, public bodies and workers ought to undertake the propagandist work more zealously. Lectures ought to be often arranged in villages about the evil effects of drink. Leaflets in simple vernacular ought to be freely distributed, and magic lantern lectures should be frequently arranged. Responsible officers who may be willing to do propagandist work in villages should be allowed by Government to take a full and free part in the propagandist work in their leisure time. I would further suggest that certain responsible Revenue and Police officials may be asked to explain to the people the evil effects of drink while on tour. Side by side with this, the production and consequently the consumption of liquor should be reduced annually by 5 per cent. as is being done by the Bombay Government this year. As time passes on, by both the methods, *viz.*, educating the public systematically and gradual reduction in consumption of liquor, a point may be reached, say, after 10 or 15 years, when the moral tendencies of the people have been so much developed that complete prohibition by legislation can be made without leading to any results, enumerated in question no. 5. At such a time complete legislative prohibition may be attempted.

2 and 3. I am of opinion that there should be a change in the Government policy somewhat on the following lines. There should be a clear declaration that Government strongly desire that there should be complete cessation of consumption of liquor in all parts of India except in those parts where it may be required owing to unhealthy climate, that it is necessary that the moral tendencies of the people should be awakened against drink before any prohibitive legislation is undertaken, that they are willing to help the people in achieving this object, that they are themselves doing what they can through their servants, and that they will undertake prohibitive legislation when suitable time comes, say, after 10 or 15 years, without any regard to the revenue that may be coming from that source.

6. I do not think that any artificial prohibition which is not in conformity with the moral tendencies of the people will have any lasting good effect on the present or future generation. To eradicate the vice by immediate prohibition is to attempt social reforms by a process of revolution. It cannot have good effect in the long run. It ought to be by a steady process of reform from within the society itself that the cessation of the consumption of liquor must be brought about. Then alone it shall have lasting effect on future generations.

8. I am of opinion that madi, toddy and shindi are very useful in relieving the fatigue of the labourer and I think after a full day's labour a glass of it gives him relief and energy. It has no bad effect on his health. I am therefore not at all in favour of the prohibition of madi, toddy or shindi.

9 and 10. At the outset I must state that I approve entirely all the methods suggested and would recommend all to be put into practice.

(*a*) As to rationing of shops.—Every year 5 per cent. less quantity should be supplied to *each locality*.

(*b*) The price of liquor should be increased at least 5 per cent. every year.

(*c*) Shops should be reduced at least 5 per cent. every year.

(*d*) Shops should be opened from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. only. They may be kept open every day as at present.

(*e*) The strength of liquor should be reduced every year. This year it should be 40 U.P. as has already been done. Every further year, it should be reduced by 5 degrees. After four years the strength of the liquor should be uniformly 60 U.P. I may state that the required strength should be obtained by process of distillation and not by mixing water.

(*f*) Shops should be in the heart of the city if the neighbours have no objection, and not in solitary places away from the town. It must be at such a place that all visitors while going to it should stand the chance of being seen by anyone, while of course the compound and extent of the place should be such as not to cause nuisance to the neighbours.

As to (*g*) and (*h*) I am unable to make any definite suggestions but I would like to add that the importation of foreign liquor should be restricted in such a way that it may not be substituted for the reduction that is being made in the consumption of country liquor.

(*i*) Liquor should not be sold to persons under 21 years of age.

(*j*) Temperance associations may be subsidised, but the subsidy should depend upon the amount and nature of work they do.

(*k*) The customers ought to drink the liquor in the shop premises. They should not be allowed to take it home, and no customer should be given more than a bottle.

12. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, but I would suggest that they should be asked to send their representations every year and they should be respected if they undertake to make good the major portion of the revenue and to help in preventing illicit distillation, etc., in the locality.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to increase of crime. I would attribute about 30 per cent. of the crimes against property to drink. The evil of drink also adversely affects the output of work.

15. I would make the following suggestions:—

(1) Land revenue should be increased to the maximum of 10 per cent. slowly.

(2) All hotels, tea and coffee houses and bidi shops should be substantially taxed.

(3) Net income from special agricultural produce which gives more income comparatively with labour and expense, for example, grapes in Nasik, sugarcane in Baramati and Nagar Districts, figs in Poona may be taxed at two pies per rupee like the income tax.

(4) Tram cars—The rates should be increased 50 per cent.

(5) I would propose a maximum increase by 50 per cent. on the present rates for irrigation slowly.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. OKA replied to the President:—"I have been practising at Nasik for the last 13 years. I have seen Bagalan, Peth and Kalwan. The Bhils and Kolis residing there are very much addicted to drinking. Illicit distillation is also going on there. Taking into consideration the level of intelligence of Kolis and Bhils, I think that if total prohibition is introduced, they will not take to it easily.

"If primary education were introduced first, the problem of drink will be easier of solution.

"I believe that by merely passing legislation against prohibition the moral tendencies of the people addicted to drink will not be improved. If the leaders, in co-operation with Government, will impress upon the drinking class the worst effects of the evil of drink, it will have a lasting effect on the people. I am therefore not in favour of immediate prohibition. I am of opinion that efforts should be made by private agencies.

"The present excise policy of Government runs counter to the policy that has been declared. I think that both Government and people should aim to carry it out.

"I think that it will be an interfering with the habits of those foreign communities which take drink in moderation.

"The importation of foreign liquors will have to be controlled and checked if prohibition is to be carried out.

"Drink should be stopped altogether except among those communities, such as Europeans, etc., in which it is not considered a crime to take wine or liquor in moderation.

"I would suggest that certain responsible Revenue and Police officials may be asked to explain to the people the evil effects of drink while on tour. All other methods, such as rationing of shops, reduction of shops, increase in prices, etc., will have some effect.

"By 'artificial prohibition' I mean prohibition by legislation only. What I mean is this that people must work out the prohibition to have any lasting good effect on the present or future generation. The legislative method alone will not be effective. If there will be immediate total prohibition, the people will either take to foreign liquor or to illicit distillation.

"I am against local option.

"Every year 5 per cent. less quantity should be supplied to each locality, and the price of liquor should be increased at least 5 per cent. every year.

"There should be prohibition after 10 years.

"I am in favour of increasing the local fund cess.

"I think that all hotels, tea and coffee houses and *bidi* shops should be substantially taxed.

"Net income from the special agricultural produce which yields more income when compared to the labour and expense devoted on it, for example, grapes in Nâsik, sugarcane in Baramati and Nagar Districts, figs in Poona may be taxed at two pies per rupee, like income tax, for excise purposes only.

"The rates of tram cars should be increased 50 per cent.

"I am of opinion that the drink problem is less complicated in rural tracts than in big cities.

"I am also in favour of court fees on the Original Side of the High Court and death duties."

To Mr. Baker:—"Every year less quantity of liquor should be supplied to each locality. The consumption will reduce of itself."

To Mr. Madon:—"I do not know whether Excise officers do propagandist work. I have no figures to show the Excise revenue." (The witness handed over here the statement printed below to show the consumption of liquor.)

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"People must be sufficiently educated to have any lasting good effects on the present or future generation. To eradicate the vice by immediate prohibition is to attempt social reforms by a process of revolution. It cannot have a good effect in the long run. If there will be immediate prohibition, people will take to some other drug such as *bhang*."

To Dr. Patil:—"Madi, tadi and shindi are very useful in relieving the fatigue of the labourer.

"Liquor shops should be kept open from 4 to 7 p.m.

"I advocate the use of unadulterated and unfermented toddy to be drunk under the tree."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"Drink contributes to petty offences.

"The price of a gallon of liquor may be increased."

To Mr. Mehta:—"I am not in favour of total prohibition immediately.

"Some portion of the excise revenue is immoral. I cannot say whether that portion is big or small.

"Education will have some effect on the drink problem."

*Statement produced by Mr. Oka showing the consumption of liquor in Nasik City.*

| Year. | 25 U P. | 30 U.P. | 60 U.P. | Equivalent at London Proof. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 16,156 | .... | 2,832 | 13,250 |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 12,788 | .... | 5,552 | 11,812 |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 11,087 | .... | 7,398 | 11,275 |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 11,159 | .... | 13,841 | 13,905 |
| 1917-18 .. .. | .... | 14,455 | 23,076 | 16,268 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .... | 6,320 | 21,565 | 13,080 |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .... | 7,222 | 16,251 | 11,555 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .... | 9,234 | 17,484 | 13,436 |
| 1921-22 .. .. | .... | 5,664 | 13,224 | 9,254 |

No. 44.

REPLIES BY MR. PANDURANG NARAYAN ADHAV, M.L.C., OF SATARA.

1. I had to tour round and over many districts as forest officer who served the department for 32 years, had ample opportunities to observe the drinking habits of aboriginees and other people.

2. The Excise policy initiated in the resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001 of the 7th September 1905 has not produced the expected result, though in some localities the drinking propensity is much decreased. The increase in the price of liquor is no safeguard as it has only increased the revenue whereas the consumption is practically at a stand still for many years past. The people who are addicted to drinking cannot be corrected by the devise adopted by the administration.

3. The policy should be so moulded that there is total prohibition within a certain period, say, eight years in some tracts where drinking is looked upon as a luxury and not a necessity.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition as there are tracts and avocations of certain tribes which require some sort of stimulants after a hard day's toil to keep up the spirits as these unfortunate creatures cannot slake off the tidium by amusement and recreation, such as billiard, tennis, cricket, football, operas, etc.

5. (*a*) Some manufacture of liquor by illicit means, from palm trees, mohwa flowers, jaggery, kaju, etc., will be resorted by the people who are accustomed to drink from prehistoric times, if any attempt at total prohibition is made.

(*b*) The honey-combed nature of territories of small Indian States overlapping and intervening areas (of British territory) make it impossible to imagine to carry out prohibition even at a prohibitive cost. Besides, some Indian States receive subsidies on account of excise revenue; they will not forego the loss of existing and prospective revenue. If they do not agree, it will be an unnecessary burden on the tax payer; there will be political questions to be settled under their agreements.

(*c*) Surely there will be some discontent among some tribes who are accustomed to drink for centuries. They may naturally ask what right their friends have to interfere with their customs, habits and desires. Educate them first and they will leave off drinking without ever anybody having reason and opportunity to tell them to do so.

(*d*) The temptations by illegal exactions on the part of the Preventive establishment will be very great and unavoidable and this is not desirable at all.

(*e*) The smoking of *ganja* which is more dangerous will be freely resorted to.

8. I would not prohibit toddy or shindi.

9. I would suggest the number of liquor shops and the supply of liquor should be gradually but steadily decreased from year to year.

10. I am in favour of—

(*a*) rationing of shops,

(*b*) regulating the location of shops.

(*c*) prescribing age limit for customers of liquor.

(*d*) restriction of the removal of liquor from shops.

(*e*) increase of the price of liquor in some areas.

(*f*) licensing the number of shops.

(*g*) total prohibition of the importation and sale to Indians of foreign liquors, except for medicinal purposes.

12. There will be no objection to invest municipalities with local option for determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, provided they can recoup Government that part of the revenue that is sacrificed in their areas.

13. The existing advisory committees, having no powers, cannot do any useful work unless invested with powers.

14. As a magistrate of nearly 3 years standing, I did not come across crimes attributable to drinking; I am not in a position to cite any cases. The after-effects of drinking are notorious; the drunkard cannot turn out as much work as one who had not drunk.

15. I would suggest that an education cess may be levied in all municipal towns to make up the loss.

16. Opium is generally used for children at an early age by the poorest of the poor class women to get rid of the worry of crying children and enable them to carry on the field work and other day labour to supplement the income of the male members of the family and to attend to household duties, such as cooking, grinding, crushing, early and late at night. Almost all agriculturists use opium for their children, otherwise they will not be able to make both ends meet.

The death rate is very heavy among the poor agriculturists and labourers either from opium eating or bad nutrition. A definite opinion can be pronounced by medical men, having watched such cases.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. ADHAV replied to Mr. Madon :—" I would first educate people. After they are well educated they will appreciate prohibition. In certain tracts drinking is hard.

"Some manufacture of liquor by illicit means from palm trees, mowhra flowers, jaggery, kaju, etc., will be resorted to by the people who are accustomed to drink from pre-historic times, if any attempt at total prohibition is made. Even hundred years ago drink was prevalent in the different parts of India. I have seen Bhils and Kolis drinking from generation to generation. We find some references even in ", Rigved" such as " Somawalli" " Somarasa ", and the process of manufacture of " Somarasa ". Smoking of *ganja* is very dangerous. People addicted to *ganja* become lunatic.

" Advisory Committees have no powers. They cannot be very useful. There was only one meeting during 1½ years.

"The strength of liquor should be reduced.

"Satara is notorious for crime, still I have not come across any crime perpetrated under the influence of drink."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I am not in favour of total prohibition as there are avocations of certain tribes requiring some sort of stimulants after a hard day's toil to keep up the spirits. There should be prohibition within 10 years. If total prohibition is resorted to, illicit distillation will be increased and deterrent punishment will have to be presented for offences of such sort. I do not think that punitive police will serve the purpose. *Bhang* is even more injurious than *ganja*."

To Dr. Patil.—" Tea, coffee and milk will not do in lieu of drink. Tea is as bad as alcohol. It will be one bad substitute for another. When people will be educated, they will understand the necessity of prohibition. Local conditions in America are different from those of India and though the Americans are educated and they consider total prohibition to be necessary, this fact does not hold good in the case of India.

" Unfermented and unadulterated toddy is not harmful.

" I think that the present hours of opening and closing liquor shops are quite suitable.

" Liquor shops should be located in out-of-the-way places. Eighteen should be the age limit."

To Mr. Jadhav.—" Drink should be stopped in the Satara District ; there will be no illicit distillation.

"There is no objection to invest municipalities with local option for determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, provided they can recoup Government that part of the revenue that is sacrificed in their areas.

" There must be an education cess. "

No. 45.

REPLIES (IN MARATHI) OF Mr. BALAJI HARI NIRHALI OF SANGAMNER, DISTRICT AHMEDNAGAR.

1. I am by profession a weaver and a shroff. My caste people and relatives are given to drink liquor and so I had some information and experience regarding drink and on that I have been able to form my opinion.

2. I do not at all approve of the Government policy. It is not the case that like Europeans Indians necessarily require liquor. Before liquor shops were opened, that is about fifty or sixty years ago, the vice of drink was confined to vagabonds and idlers, like the Vadaris, Ghisadis, Kolhatis and others. Agriculturists and weavers were innocent of the vice. With a view to pushing the sale of liquor, liquor contractors took advantage of the ignorance of these people and by mischievously creating a taste for it made them confirmed drunkards. An examination of the statistics of liquor sale during the past fifty years will show how rapidly this evil spread. The vice is such that if a man once begins tasting liquor he goes on drinking it all the day long, and does not care what amount he spends on it. Not only he himself drinks but makes others also drink as much as they like. While such people are under the influence of liquor they are robbed of the ornaments on their person and of the money with them. Many rich families have been ruined and reduced to a wretched condition. Therefore, the best way is to keep liquor shops away from their reach. There is absolutely no necessity of having varieties of liquor and location of shops notified. Really speaking, the spread of the evil of drink is mainly due to the system of contracts resorted to by Government. Agriculturists and weavers have been totally ruined by the evil and their wives and children have to undergo incalculable hardships and misery. Since they have taken to drink they have been unfit for work. Owing to indebtedness they are led to commit thefts, cheating and other offences. Every sort of liquor, therefore, should be banned. Opium and *ganja* should not for the present be prohibited. Their contracts should continue as before and they should be as heavily taxed as may be necessary.

Howsoever heavily liquor may be taxed, howsoever mild liquor may be offered for sale and howsoever costly it may be made, the habitual drinker has no value for money. Government, therefore, without any hesitation and consideration, should at once stop the traffic by legislation.

People would not suffer in health if they get no liquor to drink. We have experience to this effect at Sangamner where none became ill or died when liquor shops were closed for a year. On the contrary, weavers and agriculturists worked gladly and diligently for their profession and improved their condition. If, in the same manner, liquor shops are entirely closed and the temptation of liquor is taken away from the people these labouring classes will improve their condition and Government will have no occasion to incur heavy expenditure in times of famine when lacs of people die of starvation. I say this with confidence and from experience.

In this respect Government should have no anxiety and have no reason to be afraid of public censure. There was prevalent in India in olden times the system of *sati* and human sacrifice based on the *shastras*. This practice Government stopped by law, and have they been blamed for it? Have people raised strong protests and blamed Government for that? Similarly, the present liquor evil has spread among agriculturists, weavers and other people and so rather than blaming Government for putting a stop to it, they will on the contrary feel grateful. Only Government will suffer a loss and for that they may make some other arrangement they like.

3. From my long experience I say that the liquor traffic should entirely be stopped. Government should not at all think of carrying out any improvements, etc.

4. I am of opinion that liquor should be prohibited; grounds for the same are as follows:— In addition to what I have stated in answer to question No. 2 I say that on the day drunkards take liquor they meet with difficulty or have to borrow for the expenses of the family, because they cannot work under intoxication. When he has no money or gets no loan, the women in the house have to go without food. Liquor causes illness and life is shortened. Numerous instances of such premature deaths may easily be given. Drunkards become paupers and lose their credit. No one puts any trust in their word and their intellect becomes depraved. Crimes go on increasing among them. Numerous evil results follow. I am fully convinced that there is no benefit to be derived from liquor.

The abolition of the drink traffic is practicable. It should be effected by legislation. As in the case of other offences, those who drink or transport liquor should be considered as having committed an offence and severe punishment should be provided for them.

5. I am for total abolition of the liquor traffic.

(*a*) Stringent rules may be framed to keep a strict watch on the drunkards with the assistance of the village patil, talati, watchman and other people and the village panchayat should be entrusted with the enforcement of the rules.

(*b*) Village officers and panchayats should be made responsible for prohibiting the importation of liquor from other States.

(*c*) This evil prevails in the Presidency among vagabonds and men of low charac er. But the Government system of liquor shops has carried the vice among the other classes of people and the same has gone on spreading. Government is to be blamed for this. By prohibiting liquor no disturbance would result. Sensible people will, on the contrary, be pleased and bless Government for it. Though in this matter realisations of taxes will diminish, yet Government will have the support of the masses in their administration.

(*d*) It is apprehended that Government would have to maintain a large staff to prevent illicit distillation which would be prevalent as the result of the total prohibition of liquor. But there is no reason to entertain any such fear. For this a village panchayet composed of village officers and the sensible men of the village should be made responsible to keep a watch.

(*e*) If liquor is prohibited other intoxicants are not likely to come into use. People will manage to satisfy their desire with (harmless) drinks like tea.

6. If liquor is prohibited its good results will be found in the present generation. Immorality and depravity resulting from their being addicted to drink will disappear and they will be morally better. I am confident that these people will improve their condition and the resulting benefits will have an abiding effect on the coming generation.

7. If Government themselves think of abolishing the liquor traffic, a legal measure is necessary. Similarly, the restrictions imposed or about to be imposed by several castes on the use of liquor will have the support of law and in this work the position and prestige of the castes will be raised by law.

8. I approve of the total prohibition of liquor and I am of opinion that the same should be made applicable to every variety of liquor.

9. There is nothing undesirable or impossible in totally prohibiting liquor. I therefore think that there is no reason for framing any other rules.

10. I do not at all wish to give any information under this head. I wish that liquor should be totally prohibited. Whatever regulations may be framed, the evil, rather than disappearing, will go on increasing. The effect of the regulations will be a prolific means of harassing the subordinate staff and the ryots, with the result that the object of Government will be upset and discontent will prevail.

11. Liquor should be permanently prohibited. It will be proper to have a liquor shop where three-fourths of the voters for the Council elections put in a demand for the same.

12. A small portion of the loss Government will suffer from the abolition of liquor should fall on municipalities and local boards, if their financial condition is sound.

13. As I maintain that liquor should be totally abolished there is no reason for me to express any opinion whether the present advisory committees are in any way useful or not.

14. Owing to liquor drinking crimes increase and go on increasing and the output of work very much diminishes. Of this I am sure.

15. The loss of revenue that Government may suffer by the abolition of the liquor traffic may be made good by prescribing stringent punishment and imposing fines on drinkers and those who smuggle liquor as well as from those guilty of illicit distillation. If by this means loss is not made up, it should be supplemented by a tax like the poll-tax. But this arrangement should be made in respect of the net income Government derives after meeting the working expenses. The tax on *ganja* and opium should be enhanced. The Abkari Department should be entirely abolished, and so the expenses being reduced the deficit will be smaller.

It has been shown that the income of the Excise Department is approximately about three or four crores. But it is not shown whether this is obtained from liquor alone or it includes that from *ganja*, opium and *bhang*. But I understand that it includes the income from the above intoxicants. Leaving aside the income from liquor, a large income is derived from *ganja*, *bhang*, opium and *charas*. If the tax on these drugs is still enhanced, much good will be done. If the income derived from heavy fines imposed, after prosecution, on smugglers of liquor, those who drink it and those guilty of illicit distillation is taken into account and the Abkari Department entirely closed, there will be a substantial increase of income. There is absolutely no reason to employ an additional establishment. How honestly do these employes work in detecting crimes? Bribe and illegal gratification obtain among them. So the evil of drink being much checked, people are more harassed. Therefore, this Department should be reduced and expense saved. As I have suggested above, if village officers, a committee of the village people and various communities are made responsible by law, many crimes will be detected, and a strong check being placed on these dishonest people, Government will not even be put to any serious loss. Similar responsibility may be thrown on municipalities, wherever they exist, and on the Police. By so doing expense will be saved and all difficulties will disappear.

16. Opium, *ganja*, *bhang* and *charas* should not be for the present totally prohibited. An extremely heavy tax should be imposed on them. Subsequently, the rise in respect of these intoxicants also will be gradually checked; only liquor should be immediately prohibited by legislation.

17. A practice prevails of administering opium to small children. But it is not possible to stop it unless the people leaving aside their ignorance take to education.

Having regard to all these facts and the relation between the rulers and the ruled, Government should not lose this opportunity of relieving the people from this dire vice. Nor should they postpone the matter for future consideration. Though the receipts from the tax might fall short, the matter should at once be brought into force as it is for the benefit and contentment of the people. If, after a good deal of consideration and appointment of committees, the matter is postponed, people will lose confidence (in Government). So the liquor traffic should be immediately stopped and the necessary legislative measure be prepared. Just as Government is making efforts to make up the deficit in the budget caused by increase of expenditure, endeavours should be made to meet this loss also. In doing so the people, instead of being sorry, will be glad and will feel grateful to Government.

In order that weavers and agriculturists may derive benefit, Government have established societies for them but owing to the drink evil they are almost on the verge of ruin. So if the liquor traffic is completely stopped, societies will flourish to the good of the people.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. NIRHALI replied to the President.—" In Saugamner out of a population of 11,425 in 1911 there were 4,225 weavers. In 1921 in the population of 9,761 there were 3,492 weavers. One to hundred is a very low percentage of weavers. There is one vernacular school there at present ; about 200 boys of weavers are learning there. For many years there were no facilities for boys going to school.

" I am 62 years old. There was no drink in Sangamner whatsoever about 50 years ago. Nirhalis, Salis, Koshtis and Marathis are all weavers and they are all addicted to drinking. There has been simultaneous increase in drink in all classes, except the Gujaratees and the Brahmins. No attempt was made to have a shop at Sangamner in the beginning, nor was there a single shop in the whole of the taluka. For the present there is no shop either in the town or the taluka. People are very much benefitted by the non-existence of the liquor shop. Good many weavers have grown rich and purchased some gold. If they go to Akola for some business they take drink there but after their return they never even think of it. Kolis and Thakors in Akola are addicted to drinking. Mhowra flowers are available there. They do distil illicit liquor there ; some illicit distillation must be ignored.

" There should be total prohibition all at once and immediately. Curtailing the supply gradually would be of little use. Nobody would die if he was forced to give up liquor. The people will even be ready to pay more taxes if they are satisfied that drink is really being prohibited. There should be increase in land revenue. There should also be increase in income-tax. The Police Department should be left to deal with illicit distillation ; there is no necessity to keep a separate establishment. Toddy as well as foreign liquor should also be prohibited. There is no toddy shop in Sangamner.

" If the majority of the population is in favour of total prohibition, the minority of foreigners must respect the feelings of the majority. If they want drink, they should go to their own country. "

To Mr. Baker.—" About 50 years ago there was one private liquor shop in Sangamner. At that time there was very little sale. This shop spread the temptation of drink among the people. There was no necessity for this shop, nor did any one of us request Government to open one. In my opinion the temptation to drink should be removed as far as possible."

To Rao Saheb Desai.—" There was no illicit distillation after the closing of the liquor shop in Sangamner. If any law be enacted prohibiting liquor altogether, there will not be any trouble or discontent. "

To Dr. Patil.—" There will be a great advantage if drink is prohibited altogether. Government officers have satisfied themselves in Sangamner that people will and can do without drink.

" In order to save trouble and worries husbands get drunk. In order to earn money to run the house, women are obliged to seek employment. They silence their children by giving them opium and keep them home and then go to their work. If liquor is prohibited, there will be no necessity to continue the sale of opium."

To Mr. Jadhav.—" Drunkards are never wise."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol.—" I represent all the weavers as a class—drinkers and non-drinkers."

To Mr. Mehta.—" I am a co-operator. There is no need of non-co-operation for the prohibition of liquor.

" There are some who drink even in the month of Shrawan. "

(The oral evidence has been printed as prepared by the Committee's Reporter. The amendments in it, suggested by the witness, are shown in his letter printed below.)

Ahmednagar, 13th July 1922.

To

THE SECRETARY, EXCISE COMMITTEE, BOMBAY.

With reference to your office letter dated 16th June 1922, enclosing a copy of my oral evidence as recorded by the Excise Committee, I have to state that the delay in replying was due to my ignorance of the English language in which your remarks were written and to inform you that I suggest the following alterations :—

Paragraph 1.—I do not make out what the Committee meant by ' one to hundred is a very low percentage of weavers. ' I never said so. I simply gave the figures and told the Committee that the fall in population of weavers was due to drink. In my oral evidence I submitted a statement of sale of wine at Sangamner showing the increase of the vice during the last ten years at Sangamner under the signature of the Collector of Ahmednagar. No reference is made of that in the copy since it is very important to show that the rise in taxation does not reduce the vice but that it increases notwithstanding such rise.

In my reply to Mr. C. M. Baker I never said ' temptation to drink should be removed as far as possible'. On the contrary I emphatically insisted upon the total prohibition of drink immediately and without delay. To Dr. S. W. Patil I said that the husbands get drunk and when they come home they beat and trouble their wives and thus their private family life is embittered by this vice of drink and not the words ' in order to save the trouble and worries husbands get drunk '. Drunkards do not work and hence their wives and other female relations are obliged to work and for that they resort to give opium to their children. I am still of opinion that if the drink is stopped there is no necessity to give opium also.

In the copy under reply I find no reference is made about my statement before the Committee that no value whatsoever should be attached to the evidence of drunkards and liquor shop-keepers and also to the statement made by some witnesses who favoured the opinion of partial prohibition of drink since these latter people not addicted to drink do not exactly appreciate the danger of continuing this vice any longer.

These are the only alterations which I suggest. I hope you will please excuse me for the delay.

BALAJI HARI NIRHALI.

STATEMENTS PRODUCED BY MR. NIRHALI.

I.

*The sale-proceeds of the liquor shop at Sangamner.*

| Year. | Gallons sold. |
|---|---|
| 1907-8 .. .. .. | 1,741 |
| 1908-9 .. .. .. | 1,266 |
| 1909-10 .. .. .. | 1,884 |
| 1910-11 .. .. .. | 2,643 |
| 1911-12 .. .. .. | 2,651 |
| 1912-13 .. .. .. | 2,768 |
| 1914-15 .. .. .. | 3,023 |
| 1915-16 .. .. .. | 2,251 |
| 1916-17 .. .. .. | 3,191 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. | 3,102 |

II.

*The proportion of weavers and the total population of Sangamner.*

| Year. | Population. | Weavers. |
|---|---|---|
| 1911 .. | 11,445 | 4,223 |
| 1921 .. | 9,761 | 3,492 |

## No. 46.

REPLIES OF Mr. D. R. MOBEDJI, HUZUR DEPUTY COLLECTOR, NASIK.

2. In my opinion the Excise policy of the Government of India is a failure. It has not secured the objects aimed at, except the subordinate consideration of revenue. By Government distilling liquor and supplying it for sale at central and other shops even the humblest, minded to get drunk, has got ready-made facilities of going to a licensed shop and getting his drink, besides the fact that the shop licensees are keenly interested in pushing the sales. He has only to provide the necessary small amount of money and, being a drunkard, he will do anything to get it together, if need be, even by stealth. The same amount will never be sufficient to enable him to manufacture for his private needs only. I am therefore wholly opposed to Government catering for drink even under a licensed system. Of course the greater the restrictions the greater are the precautions taken to distil stealthily. Thus, partial prohibition has not and will not succeed in weaning people from the drink habit.

3. I cannot offer any suggestions to improve upon the present system, except that, if it is made difficult for the people to get country liquor, it is imperatively necessary to make it more difficult to get foreign liquors and other intoxicating or more deleterious drugs.

4. Entire prohibition will be worse still. It can never succeed; besides the fact that a preventive staff out of all proportion would be rendered necessary without the compensating advantage of a fat revenue pouring into the Government coffers.

5. Not favoured. The objections are most sound and unanswerable.

6. It is hopeless to expect legislative prohibition to effect any large influence upon the people in this or the next generation. A sure effect will be a large number of inquisition officers prying into the secrets of individuals and an intolerable amount of oppression.

7. Complete cessation of the use of liquor is impossible.

8. Use of fresh toddy is entirely harmless, nay, even beneficial to health.

9. If the primary object is to check not the moderate drinking habit but the habit of getting intoxicated, then the whole system of central distilleries and the inducement of ready-made shops as also any sort of monopoly should be abolished altogether. Individuals should be left to distil for their own strictly private and personal needs at home stills and no large plants and warehouses should be allowed to be set up.

10. None of the means suggested would be of any practicable use, except (*j*) for which small subsidies for propaganda work among intemperate classes, preferably by influential men of the same class, may be of some use.

11. No.

12. Granting power to local or municipal bodies would not effect any improvement.

13. No.

14. In large cities it does and the evil of drink certainly has effect on the output of work. This is eminently a question for medical opinion.

15. A sufficiently heavy tax on home-stills should be levied and it should be made compulsory by law for any one who wishes to put up a home-still to report and get his still registered. Heavy fines for failure to report, with a system of 25 per cent. of the fine to be given as reward to an informer of an unregistered still, would ensure correct registration—especially with the voluntary aid of prohibitionists and temperance workers—and revenue to Government in proportion to the number of such stills. Registration and collection of revenue can be left to be done by the Revenue Department and no costly Excise Department would be needed. Permission to erect stills of small capacities for home needs only can be granted. Thus there will be no inducement held forward to non-drinkers to tempt them to take to drinking. Humble labourers and poorer classes will not be able to get ready-made drinks before their nose and cannot afford to work their own stills but must perforce go without drink. Of course, a suitable heavy tax on imports of foreign liquor and on their shops would be necessary.

16. No remarks to offer.

17. Do.

---

### ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MOBEDJI replied to the President:—"I have been in Nasik for the last 2½ years. My experience shows that the Kolis generally inhabit in Bagalan and Kalwan. I think they have greater propensities to drink. I have no information as to whether they get raw material for illicit distillation. I have come across cases of illicit distillation. I cannot give any idea as to the number of cases of illicit distillation. I do not know what material they use for illicit distillation. I was in charge of Akola and Sangamner. Kolis inhabit there; they are addicted to drinking. I cannot say whether there are any raw materials available for the illicit

distillation of liquor. I was in Sangamner before I came to Nasik. There was a liquor shop in Sangamner during my time. I cannot say what the condition of that taluka was as regards drink at that time. I was not concerned with these communities so far as the drink question was concerned.

"As drunkenness is going on as before, I am of opinion that the Excise policy of the Government of India has proved to be a failure. I cannot give any other reason. My idea is that this business of providing liquor by Government ought to be taken out of Government hands. When there is a liquor shop ready to sell liquor anybody can be tempted to buy, and I consider it a temptation for people to drink. All country liquor shops should be closed. I am in favour of stopping all liquor trade whether it is in the hands of private persons or in those of Government. The point I would like to put forward is that so far as the drink of an individual is concerned, he should make his own arrangements for it. He may have his still. I consider this feasible. I would control private stills by a system of registration. I would like every one to get himself registered and get his license from Government to have a private still. Any illegal use of the still will be stopped by cancelling the license for that private still. The liquor distilled from private stills will not be more harmful than the present country liquor. By this process the number of drinkers will be largely reduced and it will also put a stop to inducement on a very large scale. Whatever liquor that will be possible to be distilled by men of the poorer classes will be required by them for a moderate use and cannot be put to an immoderate use.

"I have no direct information as to whether foreign inferior liquor is more harmful than country liquor. Foreign inferior and superior liquors should be made more difficult to get. There is no other way to do this except by taxing them. Though the Central Government will be a loser by putting a tax on foreign liquors, still the revenue consideration must be always subordinated in such cases.

"Entire prohibition would be worse still. It will be doubly expensive to Government owing to (*1*) loss of revenue on account of closing liquor shops and (*2*) to the expenditure of more money to keep up a Preventive staff.

"An individual moderate drinker should be left to distil for his own strictly private and personal needs in home stills and no large plants and warehouses should be allowed to be set up.

"I would allow private stills even for industrial centres such as Bombay, Ahmedabad and Poona.

"I would put a tax on jaggery, molasses and kaju if they are used for the manufacture of liquor in private stills according to the quantities declared by the licensee as required for the particular still when being licensed and for the period licensed.

"I would not restrict the use of fresh toddy. Toddy drawn in the morning can be drunk at night without doing any harm. The trade in toddy can be extended for the sake of the poor.

"I do not want to try any measures mentioned in question no. 10, except (*j*), because I do not believe that they will be of any use.

"I am not in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. I am against granting any power to be exercised by the public, as being pure tyranny.

"I will not favour the suggestion of investing local bodies, *e.g.*, the municipalities and district or taluka local boards with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, even if there were legislation for it. Howsoever in minority drinkers should be allowed to have their drink. Granting power to local bodies will not effect any improvement.

"In my opinion agriculturist ryots will object to any extra taxation even if drink is altogether put a stop to."

To Mr. Baker.—"I know not exactly what strength people will manufacture if they are allowed to have private stills.

"There will be a moral gain for Government if this system of private stills were allowed.

"Government will have a revenue by fixing some fees on these private stills."

To Mr. Jadhav.—"I have not actually examined figures, but my general observations show that there is no change for the better so far as consumption of liquor is concerned and the consumption figures from 1881-82 recently compiled by me as per the Committee's request go to confirm my observation.

"If the owners of private stills will manufacture liquor of a very high strength or will be tempted to have more liquor than what they actually want, they will ruin themselves and therefore I do not expect them to do any such things. Further, the excessive manufacture of liquor will be put a stop to by giving owners of stills exact standards by which they will be able to distil only a stipulated quantity. The fear of heavy prices and heavy punishments of imprisonment being awarded for illegal acts of the sort would effectually neutralise any tendency towards crime in this respect."

To Rao Saheb Desai.—"My scheme is intended not to interfere with moderate drinkers while it will not give ready-made drink to any classes. The moderate drinkers will drink moderately."

To Dr. Patil.—"I know nothing about fermented toddy."

To Mr. Mehta.—"I am in favour of stopping all immature liquor.

"The scheme, I have presented about private stills is the child of my brains and it has no parallel anywhere."

*Statement produced by Mr. Mobedji showing consumption of country liquor.*

| Year. | City Population | Nasik. | | | District Population | Nasik District. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 25 U. P. | 30 U. P. | 60 U. P. | | 25 U. P. | 30 U. P. | 60 U. P. |
| 1913-14 .. | 30,098 | 16,156 | .. | 2,832 | 905,039 | 120,509 | .. | 45,035 |
| 1914-15 .. | ,, | 12,788 | .. | 5,552 | ,, | 106,125 | .. | 65,004 |
| 1915-16 .. | ,, | 11,087 | .. | 7,398 | ,, | 79,755 | .. | 94,136 |
| 1916-17 .. | ,, | 11,159 | .. | 13,841 | ,, | 60,117 | .. | 177,807 |
| 1917-18 .. | ,, | .. | 10,055 | 23,076 | ,, | .. | 59,710 | 182,035 |
| 1918-19 .. | ,, | .. | 6,320 | 21,565 | ,, | .. | 38,345 | 165,320 |
| 1919-20 .. | ,, | .. | 7,222 | 16,251 | ,, | .. | 39,495 | 161,745 |
| 1920-21 .. | 38,211 | .. | 9,234 | 17,484 | 8,33,000 | .. | 33,345 | 126,350 |
| 1921-22 .. | ,, | .. | 5,664 | 13,224 | ,, | .. | 25,320 | 104,070 |

| | Equivalent at London Proof. City. | Equivalent at London Proof. District. |
|---|---|---|
| 1905-06 .. .. | 21,490 | 10,710 |
| 1906-07 .. .. | ,, | 11,725 |
| 1907-08 .. .. | ,, | 13,762 |
| 1908-09 .. .. | ,, | 12,124 |
| 1909-10 .. .. | ,, | 13,555 |
| 1910-11 .. .. | ,, | 13,468 |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 33,463 | 63,112 |
| 1912-13 .. .. | ,, | 10,907 |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 13,250 | 108,396 |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 11,812 | 105,596 |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 11,275 | 97,470 |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 13,905 | 116,211 |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 16,268 | 114,611 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 13,050 | 92,969 |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 11,555 | 92,344 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 13,456 | 73,881 |
| 1921-22 .. .. | 9,254 | 59,352 |

*Statement produced by Mr. Mobedji showing consumption of country liquor in the Nasik District.*

| Year. | Population. | Country Liquor. | | Equivalent at London Proof. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. | |
| 1881-82 .. .. | 781,206 | 36,154 | .... | 27,115 |
| 1882-83 .. .. | ,, | 44,942 | .... | 33,706 |
| 1883-84 .. .. | ,, | 49,236 | .... | 36,927 |
| 1884-85 .. .. | ,, | 75,676 | .... | 56,257 |
| 1885-86 .. .. | ,, | 81,870 | .... | 61,402 |
| 1886-87 .. .. | ,, | 83,712 | .... | 62,784 |
| 1887-88 .. .. | ,, | 78,384 | .... | 58,788 |
| 1888-89 .. .. | ,, | 72,955 | .... | 54,716 |
| 1889-90 .. .. | ,, | 70,171 | .... | 52,628 |
| 1890-91 .. .. | ,, | 74,229 | .... | 55,671 |
| 1891-92 .. .. | 843,582 | 72,550 | .... | 54,412 |
| 1892-93 .. .. | ,, | 54,254 | 48,728 | 60,179 |
| 1893-94 .. .. | ,, | 53,300 | 31,161 | 52,439 |
| 1894-95 .. .. | ,, | 56,878 | 40,385 | 58,812 |
| 1895-96 .. .. | ,, | 60,589 | 33,658 | 58,905 |
| 1896-97 .. .. | ,, | 54,358 | 27,386 | 51,723 |
| 1897-98 .. .. | ,, | 56,612 | 29,455 | 54,241 |
| 1898-99 .. .. | ,, | 46,238 | 21,736 | 43,372 |
| 1899-00 .. .. | ,, | 33,765 | 13,854 | 30,865 |
| 1900-01 .. .. | ,, | 46,515 | 19,104 | 42,528 |
| 1901-02 .. .. | 816,504 | 37,738 | 10,967 | 32,690 |

*Statement produced by Mr. Mobedji showing consumption of country liquor in the Nasik District—(continued).*

| Year. | Population. | Country Liquor. | | Equivalent at London Proof. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 25 U. P. | 60 U.P. | |
| 1902-03 .. .. | 816,504 | 30,492 | 10,695 | 27,147 |
| 1903-04 .. .. | ,, | 54,081 | 25,066 | 50,587 |
| 1904-05 .. .. | ,, | 60,328 | 19,689 | 53,122 |
| 1905-06 .. .. | ,, | 86,744 | 47,341 | 83,994 |
| 1906-07 .. .. | ,, | 94,783 | 55,789 | 93,403 |
| 1907-08 .. .. | ,, | 119,393 | 71,254 | 118,047 |
| 1908-09 .. .. | ,, | 97,296 | 37,878 | 88,123 |
| 1909-10 .. .. | ,, | 113,132 | 35,195 | 98,927 |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 905,039 | 130,143 | 53,929 | 119,179 |
| 1911-12 .. .. | ,, | 146,987 | 52,827 | 131,371 |
| 1912-13 .. .. | ,, | 122,722 | 53,074 | 113,271 |

No. 47.

REPLIES OF MR. V. R. GUPTE, LL.B., M.L.C., OF POONA.

1. I am a pleader by profession. I have been an humble worker in the cause of temperance from my boyhood. I have done some prohibition work also. I have been a member of the Poona Temperance Association for several years. I was a Councillor in the Poona Municipality. I am a Member of the Legislative Council, Bombay. I wanted to introduce in the Legislative Council a Bill to prohibit consumption of liquor in the Bombay Presidency but sanction to its introduction, as being a financial measure, was not granted by the Government of India and the Bombay Government. I append a few copies of the Bill.

2. The policy of the Government of India contained in their Resolution, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905—

(*a*) is neither sound, moral, effective nor clear;

(*b*) its results have been to keep on or even foster drinking habits of certain sections of the people, to under-estimate the evil effects of drink, to drink boldly without care for public criticism, and curtail the force of religious teachings against drink;

(*c*) it has not been an effective check on intemperance; poverty, climatic conditions and social and religious restrictions are more responsible for keeping down sales than the policy of Government. The facilities for drunkenness even at the liquor shops are many and the scenes in front of country liquor shops amply demonstrate the truth contained in the statement.

As Government think it their duty to make provision for the drink of the persons who want it in moderation, the policy has given encouragement to liquor traffic, clothing all its dark side with Government's moral sanction. The location of shops, the extent to which check is exercised by the Abkari Department and the various methods followed to attract people to the liquor shops have not decreased sales. The increase in taxation is regulated in such a way as not to diminish the sales. The restrictions on their numbers are not enough to minimise temptation and public opinion in these matters is not the guiding force. If Government is going to be the dealer in liquor, it cannot, of course, sell anything that is necessarily injurious to health; and country liquor is not free from injurious substances. There seems to be no reason why the policy of a Province should continue to be in the leading strings of the Government of India when the Excise Department is a Transferred Department subject to popular control.

3. The above policy ought to be changed with a view to make complete prohibition the law of the Province as early as possible.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition of liquor for beverage purposes. Yes, I do consider it a practicable measure and I believe that it can be carried out by an Act of the Legislature of the Province.

5. (*a*) The present Police force along with the Abkari staff (during the initial stages) should be given the power to investigate offences and check liquor traffic. The facilities of illicit means are already there. If it is supposed that prohibition would make men rush upon these means, all of a sudden, the larger number of the preventive establishment in the Police force, the stricter supervision and the severer punishment, if prescribed, would sufficiently meet the feared evils. The growing force of public opinion will also produce its results.

(*b*) The difficulties of non-prohibited surroundings—different states with separate Government—did exist in America, and could be well met there by the Governments of States who started the prohibition movement. The Abkari policy of the Government of Bombay is working now successfully in the neighbourhood of States, such as Baroda, Hyderabad and Kolhapur, who have their Abkari administration in their own hands. The difficulties of Portuguese territories do exist at present. More vigilence and greater checks will have to be exercised round States which do not agree with the British policy. Some States now have, under contracts, only transferred to the British Government their Abkari Policy. That is an arrangement by contracts only and cannot be expected to be eternal and must change. The Bombay Presidency has a large number of States, say, about 350, but Kathiawar, Mahikantha and Rewakantha have defined borders and can be managed without much interference on the part of the States with British Excise policy. There are no doubt other States, which are not many and which are interspersed with British territory and the difficulties round these States may increase to some extent if these States follow a policy opposed to the British ideals. But they have been, hitherto, following British policy and may, if proper and sympathetic efforts are made, give up the Abkari revenue in the sure prospect of bettering the condition of their subjects and the improved financial progress of their States. The States have given up several taxes to follow the policy of free-trade and railway and mining obtaining in British India. They also know that they cannot be thorns in the way of progress. But if some States do insist on their treaty-rights and the British Government, no doubt, is bound in honour to respect those rights, border lines may be created. The religious and moral sense of the people and the rulers would not be altogether negligible factors.

(*c*) The old customs and habits of certain classes in the Presidency are not very material now. The communities like Bhils and Kolis have prohibition societies. The spirit of prohibition is by no means confined to a few individuals or a few communities. All classes have understood the disadvantages of drink. The two great religions—Hinduism and Mahomedanism—have prohibitory tenets and the severely criticised *Shakta* and his allies are hidden, if not completely abolished.

(*d*) The present Police force and the Abkari staff may be given powers of investigation. The increased temptation will soon disappear and in a few years' time all the difficulties will vanish.

(*e*) There is no force in the argument that other intoxicants and deleterious drugs will take the place of liquor if liquor is prohibited. American experience is against such a view. An independent investigator thinks that "drugs and drink are not rivals and alternatives but allies".

6. My humble opinion is that real prohibition will be effective in the present generation too. No doubt a confirmed drinker will try his utmost to get liquor by any means, but some of such drinkers, under picketing, passed months without a drop. If no temptations are held out the next generation will take to prohibition naturally and easily. There are vast communities in India who have lived without drink for several centuries and who do not know if their ancestors did drink at all.

7. I think the only effective way of stopping alcohol is by legally prohibiting it. Propagandist work at the beginning will be useful and might be resorted to.

8. I would apply prohibition to all liquors whether distilled or fermented which contain $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 per cent. or more of alcohol. The use of toddy and shindi, when quite fresh, may be allowed. They contain no alcohol when quite fresh and are regarded to be very good beverages. The moment fermentation begins and the above percentage of alcohol appears in them their sale should be prohibited.

9. I believe that probition is feasible; I, however, welcome every step taken with a view to reduce drinking.

10. The methods suggested in this question may affect the sale of liquor if followed strictly. But they would not succeed to any large extent unless enforced with a view to complete prohibition.

(*a*) Rationing ought to be strictly defined. Rationing as a step to prohibition is certainly useful, but if 5 per cent. of liquor is to be reduced during one year beginning with a year of maximum sale the result will be *nil*.

(*b*) Increasing the price assists the increase in revenue and is useful as a financial measure; but it only takes away liquor from the hands of the poor and gives it to the class next above it. It may be slightly effective, if taxes are so pitched as to make it prohibitive. The policy of Government is not to make it prohibitive. Raising the taxation will be much useful with improved conditions.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops does decrease the temptation but, unless the distances are so great as to make going to the shops very inconvenient mere reduction does not seem to produce much effect. It increases a rush in the remaining shops and is a great nuisance to the neighbourhood of shops.

(*d*) Reducing the days and hours are slightly useful; some persons may get full respite on the day of closure but some and a large number make up for the closure on the previous or the succeeding days. Some may miss drink by missing the hour.

(*e*) Reducing the strength of liquor may be useful if a limited quantity is allowed to be drunk. If no such limit is fixed, more liquor will be drunk.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops is more necessary to prevent the ugliness of a liquor shop on the high road or in a place with a community not used to drink; otherwise the farther from sight the greater the chances of more drink.

(*g*) Restricting importation and sale of foreign liquor will greatly decrease the drink in the richer classes who do not use *bevada*. It would not, however, affect the poor who contribute mostly to the excise revenue.

(*h*) What licenses are intended to be regulated and prohibited ought to have been mentioned. Club-licenses, however, should be stopped. "On" licenses may check drink on private premises and some persons who do not go to the shops may find some difficulty in getting liquor at home.

(*i*) Age limits are necessary. Youth is likely to get addicted very soon. Greater watchfulness than hitherto shown in this direction may be observed.

(*j*) Temperance work with the present policy of Government towards liquor traffic is not effective nor is likely to be effective with about 3,100 liquor shops (country and foreign) with one or more servants at each shop; and the personal interest and supervision of the contractors are too powerful to be counteracted by the temperance work of a few

individuals. The personal interest of shop-keepers and their servants, the adjoining land lady and her parafernalia, the attractions offered to the public and the Government policy of conniving and indirectly supporting the contractor are too powerful for any temperance worker. Subsidising may create more noise but much cannot be expected from it. If temperance organisations are started with Government money, they will not be able to do much work with the people. The present policy of making provision for the drink of moderate drinkers and opposing it by temperance propaganda will not sound well in popular ear and will not go hand in hand.

11. Local option is again an expression about the meaning of which all may not agree. The bodies who would determine the number and location of shops and other details of Excise policy ought to have very strong popular element on them. If they are to be of the nature and power of the present Advisory Committees, they had better not be started. Local option is supposed by some temperance workers to be more democratic than mere prohibition by law. The argument that the licensing of a place or an area should be determined by the will of the people and by no other means has some force in it. It will have that force when there are contending parties who come forward and say that they should not be debarred from their birth-right of drinking without being consulted. No section or community has yet advanced such claims to any appreciable extent. The Province as a whole (except a few persons following European habits and arguing purely on European lines, persons who have a personal interest of gain in the trade or of official temperament who wish to continue the revenue from excise) has given clear indication of prohibition. Mere imitation of the Scottish Temperance Act or of any similar law of local option would delay the prohibition movement beyond the wishes of the people and throw cold water on the good heat that has been generated for doing away with the liquor traffic which has brought on ruin and misery in several homes. Restriction on country or foreign liquor alone or on any other sort of alcoholic beverages would only curtail Government revenue without the corresponding advantages of a dry province, financially, morally or socially. If any advocate of local option is hopeful of his methods, let the option be given to the new municipality or local boards. The difficulties consequent on possible prohibition in some area and continuance of drink in the adjoining areas or villages or in a separate ward of the same town will immensely increase if not baffle all attempts at prohibition.

12. The question has been partly answered in answer no. 11.

To force the collection of revenue on the inhabitants of towns who advocate prohibition is to defeat economically what is moral and in keeping with the general wishes of the people. To make Ahmedabad, Thana, or Poona, pay the whole or a portion of their revenue from country liquors of 8, 1½ and 13½ lakhs is to put them in a financial fix. The Abkari revenue is collected voluntarily. To change its incidence and also make it compulsory will be most unwelcome and burdensome to the people. To have a permanent tax imposed from generation to generation for attempts made at social advancement will not find favour in any community. The powers of local bodies of collecting taxes are limited. They cannot be entrusted with raising one-third of Provincial revenue lost on account of the changed Excise policy. Their proper functions are to collect local rates and not Provincial revenues. I would not advocate the realization of revenue from towns and mofussil area from persons who advocate prohibition.

13. The present Advisory Committees are of very little or no use. There ought to be very strong public element on them and their recommendations should be mandatory and not advisory.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to all the crimes whether noted or not in Government reports. Drink also does affect adversely the output of work in all branches of industries. The American evidence is very useful on the point.

15. The financial problem is outside the scope of a temperance reformer; but the question may be answered to some extent. The increase of revenue from Excise on account of the maximum sale system and auctioning of shops is large. If total prohibition, say, within the next five years, is to be brought about, the financial position may be approached—

(*a*) By the general improvement of the economic, moral, social, and physical condition of the people as a whole. These advantages are invaluable and cannot allow proper computation in rupees, annas and pies.

(*b*) By retrenchment of current expenditure on administration.

(*c*) By reduction or doing away with the Imperial contribution to be made by the Provincial Government.

(*d*) By getting back the whole or at least a substantial portion of the Income-Tax revenue.

(*e*) By imposing new taxation on—

(*i*) entertainments and totalisation,

(*ii*) adjusting irrigation taxes on a new basis,

(*iii*) death duties and succession taxes,

(*iv*) stamps required for the original side of the High Court,

(*v*) duties on industrial and other concerns which have won large profits,

(*vi*) terminal taxation.

The declared policy of Government is " to the furtherance of their policy all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated. "

I have no answer to give on the remaining two questions.

A BILL * TO PROHIBIT THE MANUFACTURE, SALE AND IMPORT OF LIQUOR IN THE PRESIDENCY OF BOMBAY.

*Preamble.*—Whereas it is necessary to make provision for the prohibition of the manufacture, sale, and import of liquor in the Presidency of Bombay, it is hereby enacted as follows :—

*Short title.*—This Act may be called the Prohibition of Drink Act of 1921.

2. *Extent and Commencement.*—This Act extends to the whole of the Presidency of Bombay and shall come into force on the 1st of April 1923.

3. *Interpretation clause.*—In this Act, unless there be something repugnant in the subject of context—

(1) ' Liquor ' includes spirits of wine, spirit, wine, beer and all liquor consisting of or containing alcohol in the proportion of one-half of one per centum. It also includes all liquor produced or manufactured in India.

(2) ' Manufacture ' includes every process, whether natural or artificial, by which any spirituous, fermented or intoxicating liquor is prepared and also every process for the rectification of liquor.

4. The manufacture, sale or transportation of liquors within, and the importation thereof into, the Bombay Presidency, for beverage purposes, is hereby prohibited.

5. Whoever imports or transports or removes or manufactures liquor or constructs or works any distillery or brewery or uses, keeps or has in his possession any material, still, utensil, implement or apparatus whatsoever for the purpose of manufacturing liquor or sells or has in his possession liquor for beverage purposes shall be punished for each such offence with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with both and the liquor or the materials, etc., shall be confiscated to Government.

6. *Powers of Police Officers.*—All offences under this Act may be investigated by any police officer not inferior in rank to Sub-Inspector of Police, and shall be triable by any magistrate of the First or Second Class.

7. *All Abkari Officers may investigate and are bound to help police officers.*—All Abkari officers, if appointed under the Bombay Abkari Act (1878), may also investigate and shall be legally bound to assist the Police in carrying out the provisions of this Act.

8. *Applicability of the Criminal Procedure Code.*—All the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code (1898) relating to the issue and execution of search warrants and trial of offences shall be applicable to the offences under this Act.

9. *Payment of reward.*—Government may from time to time make rules for regulating payment of rewards to officers and informers out of the proceeds of fines and confiscations under this Act.

9A. Government may make rules and regulations consistent with the provisions of this Act, for the purpose of carrying this Act into effect.

10. *Exceptions of medicated articles.*—Nothing in this Act applies to manufacture, sale or supply or any *boná fide* medicated articles for medicinal purposes by Medical Practitioners, chemists, druggists, apothecaries, or keepers of dispensaries for which a license shall be granted by the Collector subject to the conditions which the Government may impose in this behalf.

11. *Bar of Action.*—No action shall lie against Government or against any officer of Government for damages in any Civil Court for any act *boná fide* done or ordered to be done in pursuance of this Act.

12. *Repeal of enactment.*—The provisions of the Bombay Abkari Act (1878) in so far as they relate to the import, export, transport, manufacture, sale or possession or to the implements, materials, etc., used for the manufacture of liquor are hereby repealed.

*Statement of Objects and Reasons.*

1. The traffic in spirituous liquors has enormously increased and is detrimental to the physical, moral and material progress of the country. The climatic conditions, the teachings of the two great religions and the awful poverty of the people of India call for the stoppage of the drink traffic as early as possible. But with a view to give Government time to make its financial arrangements the time of prohibition is postponed to the 1st of April 1923.

* Referred to by the witness in reply to question 1.

2. The decrease by reducing the number of shops, the reduction of the hours of sale, the closing of the shops on Sundays and other holidays, the reduction of the strength of the alcohol, the rationing system, or reduction by local option are halting processes which take up abnormally long time if they ever succeed at all.

3. The Government which could raise such large revenue from the liquor traffic will not be lacking to find out new sources of income after curtailment of expenditure. They can trust to some extent to the improved general financial conditions consequent on the prohibition of the traffic for replacing the revenue. If the prohibition movement goes on with force, the revenue must anyhow suffer.

4. Clause 5 is adapted from Amendment 18 to the Constitution of the United States of America.

5. The punishment that is provided for is higher than that in the present Abkari Act. This is intended for the purpose of completely stopping the traffic.

6. The Abkari staff might disappear and investigation of the offences may be left to the ordinary agency of the Police.

*Poona, July 10.* V. R. GUPTE.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. GUPTE replied to the President :—"I have with me some copies of a Bill to prohibit the manufacture, sale and import of liquor in the Presidency of Bombay, which I moved in the Bombay Legislative Council. This very fact clearly indicates that I am entirely in favour of prohibition, which should be brought into effect as early as possible. I believe that the alternative methods regarding local option and the regulation of consumption in the manner suggested in question no. 10 will serve the purpose to some extent but will not go far enough. What I mean to state is this that people should have an independent voice in determining the excise policy, which should not be over-vetoed by the declared policy of the Government of India as laid down in their Resolution, Finance Department, no. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905. If there will be any illicit distillation as a result of total prohibition, Government will be competent enough to check it, with the assistance of the police force, without having to bear any additional financial burden. I have taken into consideration the several communities which are addicted to drinking for generations even before pre-British days in all parts of this Presidency. It will be very difficult to apply total prohibition to such illiterate communities as the Bhils, the Kolis, the Dharalas, the Waghras and the Wadars. I do not think that it will be an interference with the habits of drinking of the people referred to above, if we will stop drink by legislation, as drinking, in general, is bad. The greater the illiteracy the more difficult it is to bring home the conviction that drink is an evil. In some cases it will be very easy to satisfy the illiterate people about the evils of drink. They will not even bring forward arguments like the literate. When once they are convinced about the bad effects of drink, they will never touch it again. All Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians and people coming from western countries in a city like Bombay will have to believe in the principle of democracy and will have to respect the feelings of the majority of Indians, if the latter pass a rule prohibiting liquor altogether. The prohibition will work smoothly in the City of Bombay as it is working for the present in America. I consider drinking in moderation also an evil, because it has a tendency to go to an excess. I have first-hand information about the prohibition of drink in America from Mr. Pussyfoot, with whom I have had a talk on the subject, in the course of which he convinced me that prohibition in America was working all right and with good effects. I think that India will have to solve this problem of drink independently of America's experience. I shall be glad to have total prohibition by private efforts, but I think that it is not practical, nay, it is impossible. I again think that private efforts will not succeed. I find that a large number of liquor contractors and their servants with the full forces of the British Government at their backs come in the way of any propaganda that can be set on foot for the prohibition of drink. Whenever, for instance, picketing was about to succeed, it was put a stop to by Government.

"In the event of total prohibition not being found feasible, I should like the idea of giving the right of local option to municipalities and local bodies, as next best.

"I am not against investing local bodies, *e. g.*, municipalities and district and taluka local boards, with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, as next best.

"I have heard about the use of drink sometimes at the time of municipal elections.

"I want to stop completely the Imperial contribution and also want to get back the income tax which is about six crores of rupees.

"Death duties and succession taxes should be imposed. The difficulty about undivided families is not insurmountable. All brothers should be made to contribute equally.

"Excess profits tax should be imposed.

" Terminal taxation should also be brought into operation.

" Personally I am in favour of an income tax above Rs. 500, but I do not think that it will bring much amount.

" Court fees should be levied on the Original Side of the High Court."

To Mr. Baker :—" Drinking in moderation is also an evil.

" Drunkenness in the neighbourhood of shops in Poona is a public nuisance.

" I think that private persuasion will not be effective."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" If I am asked to select either prohibition of liquor or primary education, as an alternative I would prefer to do away with the drink evil first."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I do not accept the criterion that ' prohibition in itself is education ', because there are some who are uneducated and still do not drink.

" Land revenue is paid over and above irrigation."

To Mr. Mehta :—" In the event of there being even a majority of drunkards I shall consider drink an evil.

" I am of opinion that total prohibition is feasible even in 1925.*"

* The report of the evidence was supplied to the witness for remarks, but none were received from him.

No. 48.

REPLIES OF MR. G. G. THAKAR, POONA.

1. I am a lawyer by profession. I am interested in the question of temperance and have been a member of the Poona Temperance Association for the last 10 years. I am also very much interested in agriculture and agriculturists and have lived among them for some time. In the practice of my profession and during my life as an agriculturist I have had a few opportunities of observing the effects of the drinking habit amongst the people with whom I came in contact.

2. In my humble opinion the Excise policy enunciated by the Government of India in their Resolution dated 7th September 1905 is

(*a*) wrong from the Indian point of view ;

(*b*) rather illogical ;

(*c*) rather impracticable.

(*a*) The policy is wrong from the Indian point of view because it is opposed to the Indian opinion and sentiment, both religious and moral, which are averse to the use of alcohol in any quantity. I know, I may be told that even in pre-British period considerable amount of liquor was consumed by the population ; and, therefore, it could not be right to say that the Indian sentiment was against it. I think this is not a correct statement of facts. No doubt there was some drinking amongst the people in the Peshwa's time. But I doubt if it was considerable. The real position in this connection appears to be that the drinking habit in pre-British period was confined to the lowest strata of society for whom liquor drinking was allowed as an exception to the general rule of prohibition. Again, drinking was considered to be a low vice. The British Government, therefore, did commit a wrong against the Indian sentiment when they made the declaration that ' they did not desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation ; and that it was necessary, in their opinion, to make due provision for the necessities of such persons'. By making this declaration and by bringing it into operation they turned a disreputable action into a legitimate one : they turned an exception into a general rule ! or, to put it rather strongly, they turned what was considered a sin into a fashionable mode of life. They thus opened wide the door for any member of society to take to drinking. It may, however, be noted that even now you will find that almost all drunkards among the illiterate classes are ashamed of their drinking habit ; and will never justify their action but will try somehow to excuse themselves. Even the literate drinker will seldom drink openly, but will satisfy his thirst rather stealthily. These facts show that the Indian sentiment is still against drinking. From the modern point of view, also, even moderate drinking will be considered to be wrong because it is supposed to lead to inefficiency without any compensating advantages.

(*b*) The policy, I humbly submit, is also illogical because, if you once accept the moderate use of alcohol as legitimate—nay, you go further and make the moderate drinker an object of solicitude to a benign Government who are ready to maintain a huge department ' to provide his needs '—I think the further statement in the policy that ' temptation to non-drinkers is to be minimised ' becomes simply unmeaning. If moderate drinking is not to be condemned but is to be looked after if it is not baneful to health, if it is intended that the class of moderate drinkers is to continue for ever, then one fails to see why a non-drinker should not turn himself into a moderate drinker or lose the supposed pleasures of a little alcohol. The implication of the words ' temptation to non-drinkers is to be minimised ' is clearly to the effect that Government regards abstinence to be a higher mode of life. But this implication is distinctly opposed to the sentiment expressed in the first part with regard to the moderate drinker. If the above implication is correct, then Government ought to have said that they regard even moderate drinking with disfavour and that they will endeavour to put it down. I, therefore, think that the sentiments expressed in the two parts of the statement of policy are a little opposed to each other and therefore the statement is rather illogical.

(*c*) The policy, as expressed, is impracticable. In fact, I fail to imagine how Government intended to make provision for drink for the moderate drinker by which the non-drinker may not be tempted. It is almost an impossibility unless very special provision, strictly restricted to the use of the known moderate drinker, had been intended. But the subsequent conduct of Government shows that they intended nothing of the sort. I know that their regulations for the location of shops and their various experiments about licensing systems will be trotted out as examples of the efforts of Government to ' minimise temptation to non-drinkers.' I think anybody ought to know—much more a Government composed of far-seeing officials—that these measures could not have counteracted the strong attraction of alcohol.

From the above discussion, I hope, I have made it clear that the words " to minimise temptation to those who do not drink " are strangely out of place in the statement of policy as a whole and appear to be introduced by way of a pious wish so as to give a colour of sweet reasonableness

to the whole statement. If those words are taken out then the remaindor does substantially represent the ideas of Government about its Excise policy.

As regards the actual results of the policy in practice, I think they are neither satisfactory nor even in keeping with the ideals expressed. The first ideal, *viz.*, 'to minimise temptation to non-drinkers', was, as I have shown above, not attainable. No doubt, the figures of consumption of alcohol lend color to the theory that the drink habit had not spread as wide as one would have expected ; but this is not at all due to the policy but to the innate aversion of the Indian to alcohol. The second ideal, *viz.*, 'to discourage excess amongst drinkers', also cannot be said to be realized. Mere figures of the offences of drunkenness cannot be of much value to determine this point. The general impression of those who move about among the drinking classes is to the effect that intemperance and the ruin caused thereby are, at least, not decreasing.

My disapproval of the present Government policy does not, however, preclude me from recording my opinion that I deem it a fortunate circumstance that Government took up the control of the liquor trade at an early stage. This fact has saved us from the evils of an uncontrolled private trade. No doubt, Government administration also has reproduced some of the evils of the trade ; but, on the whole, I think Government administration has been more advantageous than private or uncontrolled trade would have been. It has, however, created one great drawback, *viz.*, the dependance of our finance on the liquor money which has rendered the fight of the prohibitionist rather stiffer.

3. As I believe the present policy of Government is fundamentally wrong, I do not think mere changes or improvement in the present policy would meet the situation. I suggest that Government ought to make a new declaration of policy on the following lines :—

" That in view of the fact that the religious and moral sentiments of the vast majority of the people of this Presidency are strongly opposed to the use of alcohol even in small quantities, and that its use or the use of any other intoxicant is regarded by them as extremely detrimental to the moral, material and spiritual progress of the community, Government desire that the use of alcohol or any other intoxicant for beverage or for any other similar purpose shall be altogether stopped by legislation which shall be immediately undertaken with a view to provide for the general disappearance of alcohol and other intoxicants for the said purpose (with certain exceptions) either at once or gradually within five years as the financial condition of the Province and other exigencies connected with the present use of intoxicants by a part of the people may permit. The legislature shall make due provision for attaining this end either by local option or by rationing or by other methods or by a combination of two or more of those methods."

4. Yes. I am in favour of total prohibition for *natives of India.* Personally, I regard the use of alcohol for beverage purposes, even in small quantities, as an unnecessary luxury which has a baneful effect on the constitution of man. But the chief reason why I wish to prohibit the use of alcohol *in toto* is its dangerous tendency to beget an uncontrollable and ever-increasing thirst for the stuff. Nothing short, therefore, of total prohibition will be a sufficient safeguard against the temptation to drink. Half measures will be more than useless. I do consider substantial prohibition, to be attained within five years, a practical measure. Of course, it would take a long time to bring into working order complete and total prohibition. At the same time, however, I do recognize that there are great or even stupendous difficulties (some of which have been pointed out by the Committee in question no. 5, and others I shall point out in my replies to that question) in the way of attaining perfect prohibition. But I do not think that they are insurmountable or that we should not adopt a policy of prohibition because it will be imperfectly carried out. At the worst, I am prepared to say that a little imperfect prohibition is better than even well-regulated license. But we need not be despondent of attaining at least a workable prohibition. America has led the way in adopting total prohibition after deliberation for several years ; and Americans, as a whole, are neither faddists nor theorists. There is one point which is lost sight of, when we compare India with other countries, in the consideration of the problem whether total prohibition is possible or not. In India abstinence is the rule and drinking is an exception. The vast majority of Indians (I think a least 4/5ths) are still prohibitionists by religion, social sentiment and habits. This is a condition which is to be found very rarely in any other part of the world. If, therefore, drinking America or drunken Russia could adopt prohibition and stick to it, *a fortiori*, India may, at least, be allowed to try it.

The steps I would suggest for carrying out total prohibition in India would be first to adopt the prohibition law of America with necessary modifications to make total prohibition come into automatic operation before the end of five years from the date of the passing of the Act. The problems that may be created by the operation of the Act would be so varied, complex and numerous that it would be difficult for any of the present machinery of the Government to deal with them satisfactorily. I would, therefore, create a Central Prohibition Board and small Prohibition Committees in each district to carry out the provisions of the prohibition law and the prohibition policy of Government with a view to attain complete prohibition within 5 years. The present staff of the Abkari Department may be utilised as the agency to work under the Boards. The Central Board will be an elected body on which the

municipalities, the district local boards, the three temperance associations of Bombay, Poona and Ahmedabad, the Millowners' Associations of Bombay and Ahmedabad, and a well-recognized labour union, if any, should be represented. The Excise Minister would, of course, preside; but the Excise Commissioner should also be a member and act as Secretary. The Excise Commissioner, who will generally be a European, will represent the European community. But in case he is an Indian, a representative of the European Chamber of Commerce or of the European Association may be admitted. All questions of policy and general administration about Excise, except the appointments of officers, shall be decided by this Board. The District Committee shall be elected by the municipalities, the local boards in the district and by the local temperance association which may have been recognized by the Central Board. The Collector and the Police Superintendent shall be members. The Abkari Inspector for the district, if there be one, or in his absence the Personal Assistant to the Collector shall be Secretary. All questions of district administration shall be decided by the District Committees.

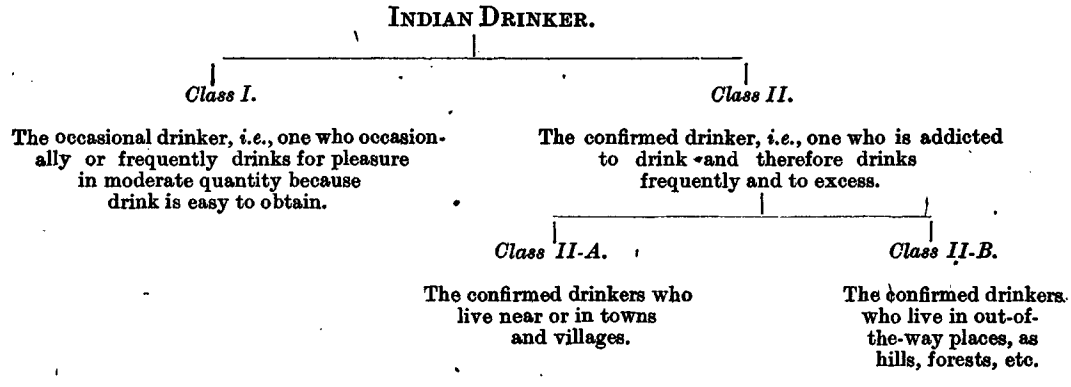
The question of the number of elected members on the Central Board or the District Committees is rather perplexing. I would, therefore, only suggest that the number of elected members on the Central Board should not be less than 10 and more than 15. On the District Committees the elected members shall not be less than 6 or more than 10.

I am aware that the composition of committees as suggested by me will be criticised as probably unworkable because there is always the difficulty of a difference of opinion between the official and the elected members. Unfortunately, in the present condition of things and of the administration of the Province, I cannot see my way to exclude officials from the Committees and treat them as mere executive officers who have to obey the orders of the Committee; nor can I entrust the carrying out of details of a prohibition scheme entirely to officials. Under the circumstances, I think we shall have to rely on the good sense of officials as well as the elected members for a harmonious working. I shall, however, be glad if any one will suggest a better or more workable composition of these committees.

5. General observations regarding the difficulties mentioned:—It is no use denying that the difficulties pointed out are real difficulties. But I do not think they are insurmountable or that their effects would reach such proportions as to substantially detract from the benefits of prohibition. The Prohibition Boards, which I have suggested, will grapple with the difficulties during the five years at their disposal and will bring them under control. The prohibition movement being a popular movement in India as in other countries, we can rely on the good sense of the people to minimise the evil of illicit production of liquor or smuggling. Further, as soon as Government adopts a policy of prohibition, temperance work in the land will be facilitated and it will have its due results. On the whole, therefore, I think the difficulties need not deter us from adopting prohibition.

Particular observations with regard to each difficulty:—

(*a*) *Illicit liquor.*—Let us analyse the position a little closely. The Indian drinkers can generally be divided into two classes:—


INDIAN DRINKER.
Class I.
The occasional drinker, i.e., one who occasionally or frequently drinks for pleasure in moderate quantity because drink is easy to obtain.
Class II.
The confirmed drinker, i.e., one who is addicted to drink and therefore drinks frequently and to excess.
Class II-A.
The confirmed drinkers who live near or in towns and villages.
Class II-B.
The confirmed drinkers who live in out-of-the-way places, as hills, forests, etc.

Now, out of these two classes, class I would be weaned from the drink habit by total prohibition because he would not care to take the trouble of producing illicit liquor himself in his home. Another factor which would work strongly against the probability of illicit home production of liquor will be the influence of women in the family. Another minor consideration against the probability of illicit home-production of liquor will be the poor and sometimes unpalatable quality of the liquor that will be produced. One who occasionally drinks for pleasure will not think of satisfying his thirst by resorting to dirty home-produced stuff. No doubt he would be willing to pay a high price for good liquor if it can be obtained without much trouble or risk to himself. Illicit liquor for this class can in this way be supplied to an appreciable extent only if distilling can be carried on stealthily on a large scale in any one place, or, if smuggling can be practised on a widespread area without detection. To my mind, both these contingencies are very remote in our present state of efficient administration. On the whole, therefore, I think, there is not much danger of illicit liquor spoiling the effects of prohibition for class I.

As regards class II-B it will mainly consist of hill tribes and tribes of nomadic habits. In their case the danger of illicit production of liquor will always remain in any circumstance. At most it may probably be increased owing to prohibition. But in their case we shall have to rely on improvement in communications, and the general progress in the condition of these backward classes for controlling illicit liquor amongst them. I am told that even amongst these classes a good deal of improvement is seen as regards drinking, and general prohibition may hasten the improvement. In any case, even now concessions have to be made to those tribes who are not easily accessible, or for whom ample facilities exist for distillation ; and therefore the introduction of prohibition may not make matters worse. At most we may have to continue for some time the same concessions as before.

There remains class II-A which does really present a difficult problem especially as it is for this class that prohibition is urgently needed. The use of liquor has no doubt spread ruin in many families in the various classes of society. But it has worked havoc among the poor classes of society of whom mainly class II-A is composed. It must be admitted that a confirmed drinker will try to resort to illicit production of wine if total prohibition is suddenly applied. In fact the success or otherwise of prohibition in the early stages will depend on the proportion of confirmed drinkers to occasional drinkers in society. If, therefore, the Government figures and the Government contention about intemperance are correct, then we need not be anxious about the results of prohibition. However, leaving aside these doubtful positions, we must face the facts squarely. No doubt there will be a number of confirmed drinkers who will feel out of sorts if drink is denied to them suddenly. In their case, therefore, gradual and careful efforts will have to be made to induce such men to give up the drink habit. And I feel that a period of five years will be sufficient to reduce the number of such men to the minimum, which will, I believe, be a negligible quantity. In any case, I think it will be admitted that under a system of total prohibition the number of confirmed drinkers will gradually tend to decrease ; and so the chances of illicit distillation being practised will also gradually go down.

(*b*) As regards Indian States, I think all the small States among them will be too glad to follow the lead of the British Government if this Government whole-heartedly adopts the policy of prohibition. Large States like Baroda, Hyderabad and Kolhapur who are receiving large Excise revenue will find it difficult to adjust their finances if they are asked to adopt prohibition. But I have not the slightest doubt that the present Rulers of those States will be quite ready at any sacrifice to adopt prohibition as it is essentially a movement in the interests of the lower classes in whom the Rulers are especially interested. If any of the larger States are, however, found unwilling to adopt total prohibition, they may be prevailed upon to adopt a rationing system, so that the danger of their liquor illicitly finding its way to the British territory will be minimised.

As for the Portuguese territory, the problem is rather difficult. I do not know if it would be possible to come to some understanding with the Portuguese authorities regarding the drink traffic. In case nothing can be done by mutual agreement, then we shall have to concentrate a large part of our detective staff on the frontier ; and, in addition, prescribe very heavy penalties for offences against the Act ; and thus stop, as much as we can, the smuggling of liquor. It may, however, be noted that smuggling will be a very difficult thing in these days of civilization with its open well-known and frequented channels of communication ; and the small quantity of wine that may, in spite of these efforts, be smuggled will be distributed over a very large part of the contiguous territory only ; and thus people in that part will be getting a little liquor off and on. The result will be that the drink habit as such will gradually tend to disappear and ultimately prohibition will have a chance of establishing itself in this territory also. But apart from all these hypothetical considerations and granting that there will be some smuggling of liquor by which the small portion of Indian territory contiguous to foreign territory may be affected, it would not be wise or equitable to deny the benefits of prohibition to the vast portion of the country not so affected.

(*c*) It would have been better if the classes in the Presidency to whom this question referred would have been specifically mentioned. I take it, however, that the question refers to classes like Bhils, Bhandaris, Kolis and certain classes of Konkani villagers. I have no personal knowledge about any of these classes, but I am told that there is considerable movement among some of these peoples in the direction of temperance. Considering the matter, however, from a general point of view such classes fall under two broad divisions, *viz.*, those living in out-of-the-way places which, owing to difficulty of access, are not subject to full administrative control, and those living in places which are subject to full administrative control. I have considered the question of the first class while considering the question of illicit production of liquor. As they will have to be left alone for some time, there can be no question of causing any discontent among them. As regards the second class, there can be no doubt that a certain amount of discontent, though not serious, will be caused among this class only, if *total* prohibition is *immediately* applied to them. It may be noted, however, in this connection, that the limit of five years for the accomplishment of total prohibition is allowed not only with a view to enable Government to adjust its finances, but also with a view to allow such exceptional cases to adjust themselves to the new conditions to come. It will be one of the main duties of the various District Committees and the Central Board to bring about and to guide such adjustment. So,

there will be no danger of any serious discontent at the beginning of a scheme of prohibition. If, during the period of five years, an intensive temperance propaganda is carried on among those communities and every day they are told that prohibition is coming, then when it actually comes there won't be any discontent over the matter. No doubt there remains the question whether a period of five years will be sufficient to bring about this change in the ideas of the people. Personally I think that with an enthusiastic committee the period of five years will be sufficient. But in any case this point need not worry us at this stage. At the end of the period of five years the question of an extension of the period for any particular community may be considered.

The ultimate consideration, however, in connection with this question 5 (*c*) is, that even supposing that the policy of prohibition would cause some discontent among the small uncivilized portion of a community, whether the general policy of a civilized Government on any particular question should be settled according to the ideas of the lowest class in society or whether it should be settled according to the advance in civilization of the generality of people. When the matter is looked at from this point of view, the obvious reply to the question of the Committee will be that the difficulty of the danger of discontent being caused in small and very backward classes of society need not come in the way of adopting prohibition if it is generally desired by the rest of the community. The case of the class or classes who may feel discontented should be either treated as an exception or serious efforts may be undertaken to raise the ideas of that class on the drink question to the level of the rest of the community.

If the present question also includes those classes who are alleged to require wine for religious purposes, then my reply as regards these classes is that such cases may be dealt with exactly on the same footing as that of wine required for medical purposes. Permits under very strict conditions for this purpose may be issued by the district committees after due enquiry. In my opinion cases where wine will be honestly required for religious purposes will be very few and they can be satisfactorily managed by the committees in consultation with the religious heads of communities.

(*d*) I have tried to show above that the danger of illicit liquor is not so large as appears at first sight. But it must be admitted that until we actually see how things progress under prohibition, we shall have to maintain in the initial stages a large preventive establishment to cope with possible danger of illicit liquor. The question, therefore, arises whether the present establishment will be sufficient or not. Under a complete system of rationing, such as I advocate, during the first five years the ordinary preventive work will be reduced to the minimum; and so I think the present staff will be sufficient for the new duties. If, however, it is found to be inadequate, the work of supervision in cities and towns may be handed over to the police. The next point to remember is that although I do not believe in the applicability to Indian conditions of the American argument that prohibition will pay its way by decreased cost of administration, still I do think that under prohibition there will be *some* decrease in the work of the Police, Jails and Asylums so as to leave us a little margin in costs to be utilised for employment of extra preventive staff in the Abkari Department. Finally, I must state that a real prohibitionist, *i.e.*, one who believes that prohibition will bring vast benefits to the community, will not be turned away by the prospect of a heavy burden for maintaining a preventive service because he believes that the benefits will far outweigh the burden.

As for the second part of the difficulty, *viz.*, the increased danger of illegal exactions, all I can say is that it is rather strange that this argument does not come in the way of increase in other preventive services. Really speaking, the character of the lower staff always depends on the attitude of the higher officials towards the people. So the remedy against the objection really lies with the higher staff. Another reason why I am not much afraid of increase in cases of illegal exactions is that under my system the Excise administration is to be entrusted to elected Committees who can be relied upon to exercise a good check over this tendency. And, as a further safeguard, it shall be provided that no prosecutions will be undertaken unless sanctioned by the District Committee of the place.

Finally, it may be remembered that illegal exactions by the lower staff are possible only owing to the ignorance of the population. I hope that during the period which may be required for establishing complete prohibition, compulsory primary education will have made considerable progress and this is a factor which will necessarily lead to the decrease of the danger of illegal exactions.

(*e*) This is an idea for which there is no definite data. American experience, it is said, is against this theory. The experience in Poona City during the last picketing period from June to September of 1922 does not support the contention. I am told of another instance in point. When Government stopped the use of *charas* a few years ago, the same fears were entertained. But they were not realised. From my enquiries amongst the common people I find that they think that a man addicted to one vice does not easily take to another vice because his first vice was stopped. So, this is a difficulty which need not come in the way of trying prohibition. And again, as I recommend the prohibition of all other intoxicating drugs along with liquor, I think the idea of people taking to other drugs, if liquor is stopped, is really not worth considering.

I wish to mention one or two more difficulties in the way of prohibition being adopted for India, *viz.* (*a*) the existence of the British in the country as a ruling class, and (*b*) the existence of large cantonments which are created for the convenience of the military forces. If the Briton had been living in this country as he lives in other countries not his own, then he would have been certainly required to abide by the law of the land, whatever it may be. But he has a special position here and it is certainly necessary and even fair that I should recognise that position and make special provision for the same. To many this may appear to be a sign of weakness or even want of self-respect. I say it is neither ; it is simply a measure of expediency ; because otherwise, I am afraid, strong opposition from the Europeans in this country will be offered to any measure of general prohibition : and the small chances of success which the prohibitionist has, in the present circumstances of the country, will be entirely marred. As prohibition is a policy which is entirely in the interests of the poorer and lower classes of society only, who have not yet been able to make their influence felt in the administration of the country, I feel that in carrying out any measure for their interest the line of least resistence must be followed. I wish, therefore, to leave the Europeans alone for the present, and to adopt prohibition for the rest of the community. Another reason why I regard that the European can be conveniently exempted is that he generally consumes liquor which is not ordinarily produced in this country or used by the common people of this country. The regulation for the distribution of this liquor will not be very difficult. The Anglo-Indians will have, for some time at least, to be treated like Europeans.

As regards the method by which this exemption can be granted to the European without creating a loop-hole through which liquor may be illicitly obtained by other people, I would suggest that, as the Europeans in the Presidency do generally belong to some one of the well-known clubs in the Presidency, these clubs may be recognized by the Central Board and permits may be issued to them to obtain a certain quantity of liquor through the year. The club authorities will be held strictly responsible for the due distribution of the liquor. For those who do not belong to a club, permits may be issued to obtain a certain amount of supply from a licensee. It should be noted that I am here only suggesting some of the ways in which exemptions can be worked. The whole question of exemptions and exceptions will have to be worked out in detail by the Central Board. It may be authorised to follow any method it may deem workable and satisfactory.

As regards the existence of cantonments, the difficulty of dealing with the problem is intensified by the fact that we shall have to deal with the military department which considers that their necessities are of supreme importance in the country. Really speaking, I wonder if the military authorities consider that the existence of superfluous drinking facilities for their menial servants and followers is essential for the efficient management of the cantonments. Factory labourers are supposed to take to the use of alcohol owing to the squalid conditions under which they live all day and night. There is not even that excuse for the resident of a cantonment. He lives almost in ideal conditions as regards housing and work. There is nothing in the other conditions of life in a cantonment which may be said to require the use of alcohol. It is therefore difficult for me to understand why the military people should allow an excess of drinking within their limits. I would have left the cantonments alone and made an exception in their favour as in that of the Europeans if it had been practicable to do so. But, as most of the cantonments are situated near cities and towns, an exception in favour of cantonments would mean an exception in favour of the neighbouring cities and towns. Prohibition will therefore have to be applied to the cantonments also. If the military authorities are found to be obdurate, then the Central Board may find a *via media* by allowing for a time a sort of rationing system in the cantonments.

6. I think there is a good deal of substance in the argument. If we read the history of American prohibition we shall find that one of the causes which facilitated the adoption of the measure was the efforts of the Anti-Saloon League which had been carrying on an intensive propaganda for prohibition nearly for a generation past and thus brought up the present generation, so to say, in an atmosphere of prohibition ideas. The result was a spontaneous adoption of prohibition as a rule of life. No doubt, we are told that prohibition in America has been a farce so far, and that you can still get liquor in America. If we carefully read those accounts which mention that liquor can be had in America, we find that they generally refer to the higher classes of society who had probably taken care to over-stock their cellars ; so also the large stock of wine merchants would be gradually utilised for supplying drink to the richer classes. But, as we have reason to believe from other accounts, the common class of people in America do generally observe prohibition very well.

The argument mentioned in question no. 6 has a bearing also on the question of illicit production of liquor. We can very well imagine that a confirmed drinker may resort to home distillation or brewing to satisfy his craving. But it should be noted that he will not allow his sons, so far as he can help it, to partake of the stuff. So the sons will have under a system of prohibition, a chance of growing up as abstainers, while under a free license system, the new generation will always be exposed to temptation to drink. And thus prohibition will have greater effect in the new generation than in the present one.

7 and 11. In the present state of Indian society I cannot conceive of any other method of attaining complete cessation of the consumption of alcohol except by direct legislation on the point. We cannot rely on social or religious bonds to attain the desired end because, with the advent of new ideas of liberty in thought, speech and action, the old social and religious ties necessarily became lax and have now no hold on members of society. This we see in the fate of caste regulations which are sometimes tried to be enforced in favour of abstinence. They are broken with impunity and without any serious consequences. As regards an alternative legislative method I cannot suggest anything effective. No doubt local option is many times talked about as one of the methods by which total prohibition may be brought about. Some people go further and say that local option is the only reasonable method by which prohibition ought to be introduced. I do not agree with this last view. Our Councils legislate for us on subjects which are more intimately connected with our social and even semi-religious life. I see no reason, therefore, why the question of drink should be put in a separate category on which no legislation can be undertaken except through local option. As regards the suggestion that instead of direct prohibitive legislation we should introduce the principle of local option, I am against it on the ground of practicability. The introduction of the principle of local option will be attended at every stage by numerous administrative difficulties caused by the complex conditions of Indian life, that it will be difficult to work it out in practice. The voters, the methods of voting, the questions to be voted upon, and the methods of carrying out the results of voting will be difficult subjects to deal with. If by local option it is meant that the local bodies may be invested with authority on questions about drink, then no doubt all these difficulties will disappear ; but then I say that it is not real local option. The second difficulty with regard to the administration of local option will be the financial anomaly that may be caused by different local areas coming to different conclusions as regards the drink traffic. The prohibition areas may be participating in the proceeds of the drink traffic carried on in other areas. This state of things may be considered to be very anomalous. The third difficulty will be about the location of shops in a wet area if the contiguous areas choose to go dry. In such cases inter-area questions will always be cropping up and will be a fruitful source of friction. Fourthly, if all the districts of local option areas choose to go dry together immediately, then the question of meeting the deficit will be precipitated and may thus cause financial confusion. Fifthly, there is the danger of vested interests circumventing the local opinion in a particular area on the question of drink and thus the object of local option will be frustrated. I admit this danger is not very great in India. But still the danger is there and ought to be taken into account.

These are some of the difficulties of local option I can think of. I am not, therefore, prepared to rely on local option merely to bring about the desired result of general total prohibition. In any case, I would not leave the question of drink traffic to be decided variously by the impulsive resolutions of various local bodies. I should wish a reasonble general policy to be chalked out by the Legislative Council and to leave the application of the general policy to the varying conditions of the different local areas to the Central Board and District Committees whose powers should be elastic and ample.

Finally, I may mention that I am not against the use of the principle of local option as such. I would, therefore, recommend that the Central Board may be allowed to frame a workable scheme of local option to be put into practice by them as one of the methods by which total prohibition may be attained within 5 years.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors distilled or fermented, indigenous or foreign. The percentage of alcohol beyond which a drink may be called alcoholic should be the one adopted in the American law. Fresh toddy or shindi should be exempted ; and everywhere its use may be encouraged. I should however like to mention that strict precautions are necessary to see that toddy or shindi is used only when fresh. Booth licenses may be allowed as far as possible, but in the case of large cities or towns careful and ample arrangements for providing fresh toddy to drinkers should be made. In fact I am assured by some of the most exprienced liquor licensees that complete provision of fresh toddy will immediately reduce very largely the consumption of liquor.

9. As I think that prohibition is feasible I need not answer this question. I have, however, to make one remark. If, unfortunately, the Committee comes to the conclusion that prohibition is not feasible or practicable (for which I shall be extremely sorry), then I would earnestly recommend for its consideration a complete system of rationing as the only alternative method which can be adopted if the drink evil is to be minimised and if the present Government policy is to be carried out in spirit as well as letter. By a 'complete system of rationing' I mean a system under which all the details about drink in connection with every individual drinker must be submitted to the licensing authorities who should have certain defined powers to make variations in those details compatible with the spirit of the Government policy. The licensing authorities, even under such a system of rationing, should be the Board and Committees which I have suggested. In no case should the administration of the Excise be left entirely in the hands of the Revenue or Abkari officials. It ought to be transferred to elected Boards who will have nothing to do with the financial administration of Government. I am clearly of opinion that nothing

short of strict rationing would achieve the end of keeping down consumption of liquor to moderate proportions.

Under a rationing system, such as is sketched above, I think Government can very well be the producer as well as the retail vendor of liquor. The middle-man, with his profits and with his tendency to push his sales, will be eliminated. There will be maximum of profit for Government with minimum of evil. I should however suggest that under a rationing system the duty on country liquor may be reduced.

I am aware that the above proposal will be criticised as entailing too much interference with the personal and private life of a subject. I must therefore make the position clear by stating that the drinker will have to submit to the regulations because he wants to indulge in a luxury which is fraught with dangerous consequences to himself and, through him, to the State. Like all other dangerous business, drink has to be controlled by rather minute regulations which may appear vaxatious, but which are quite necessary if the dangerous consequences of drink are to be avoided.

10. All the remedies suggested in this question for controlling consumption are excellent in themselves ; but they can never, either singly or collectively, be a substitute for total prohibition. All the remedies may, however, be employed during the period of 5 years allowed before complete prohibition is established, with a view to reduce gradually and ultimately to stop all liquor. The methods of actual application of these means should be left to the Central Board and District Committees.

I have made above certain constructive proposals for the rationing of liquor to be adopted if prohibition is refused. I would here point out that even if the policy of prohibition is adopted still the same system of rationing may be practised during the first five years, of course, with modifications so as to eliminate entirely the drink habit within that period. A complete system of rationing would enable the temperance workers to put forward greater and intensive efforts.

As regards (*j*) some people are rather touchy on the point of a temperance association accepting Government money for propaganda work because they think Government may thus be able to dominate the work of the associations. As I propose to substitute popular committees to control and ultimately to eliminate the drink traffic, I do not think there will be objection for a temperance association to accept funds from such a committee for its propoganda work.

As for foreign liquor, unless it is entirely stopped (subject to the exceptions mentioned above) a scheme of prohibition can have the slightest chance of success.

12. As I advocate total prohibition, I think I need not consider the question of the location or number of shops. If, however, unfortunately prohibition is not adopted and rationing is favoured, even then, I am not in favour of investing the present municipalities, and local boards with any authority in the matter. Either under prohibition or even under a rationing system, the administration of Excise during the first few years of the new policy will be so complex and will have to be attended to so carefully that it will be necessary to entrust the administration to bodies who will be expected to specialise in the matter and to work out the policy with rather personal enthusiasm. To ensure uniformity and correlation of the work in different areas also, it will be necessary to carry out administration by special bodies controlled by one guiding authority. When the Excise administration is regularised and things settle down to the new policy, then it will be time for consideration of the question of transference of these duties to the local bodies. I do certainly look for development in that direction and shall be glad if the development comes early.

As I am not in favour of the suggestion made in the first part of the question, I need not think also of the suggestion in the second part. I wish a uniform policy of Abkari to be followed for the whole of the Presidency with variations in detail to suit local conditions. In no case, therefore, can I favour the suggestion of making local bodies responsible for part of the loss of revenue. Again, it would be very difficult to work out the suggestion in actual practice. Lastly, the result of adopting the suggestion would be to put a penalty on the local body which may try to be dry and virtuous.

13. Although I have no personal experience of any Advisory Committee still from my enquiries and the actual results I can say that they have not been useful. This is natural because you cannot expect any usefulness from any advisory body when its advice is always likely to conflict with powerful financial interests. In any case, I am clearly of opinion that no good can come out of these bodies unless they are invested with actual powers.

No more change in the present Advisory Committees will satisfy any body. The Excise administration ought to be handed over to popular committees such as I advocate.

14. I am rather surprised at the question. I believe the consensus of opinion in the majority of civilized countries tends to show that alcohol is supposed to be responsible for a large amount of crime and it has certainly an adverse influence on the output of work. The last proposition

was abundantly and practically proved in the last Great War, when every nation had to stop or, at least, to restrict very strictly the use of alcohol amongst its troops and its labourers. As I am not a doctor, I cannot definitely say how alcohol directly influences the output of work of a human being; but, as an ordinary observer I can say that the indirect result of alcohol on the output of work is great; there are more absentees from work amongst the drinkers than amongst the non-drinkers.

As regards the connection of drink and crime, the only thing that we can specially mention about India is that the proportion of crime due to drink to other crimes may not be so large in India as in other countries.

15. I must admit that the financial difficulty is the greatest stumbling block in the way of prohibition. I must, however, express my strong protest on the other hand, in which, I think, all will agree, that the community have no right to continue an evil, which is a moral as well as a material wrong, for the sake of balancing its finances. I don't think any body can maintain that the State has a right to make people drink for its finances. If, therefore, the people were suddenly to stop drinking what would Government do ? What did the Government do when it was compelled by outside pressure to give up its opium revenue ? In fact, it is a wrong policy to rely for our finances on the weakness of man. And, the sooner we try to make our ends meet without the drink revenue, the better. I think, therefore, that it is incumbent on Government to try and balance its finances without any drink revenue. It is no use asking laymen like me and others who may come before the Committee to make suggestions regarding the revenue. Finance is a very complicated matter which can be satisfactorily dealt with only by experts. And I, therefore, maintain that it is the duty of Government to find out ways and means for balancing our finances if we give up our drink. The only thing that Government can reasonably ask us to express will be whether people will be willing to bear new taxation or not for the sake of making up the loss. And as soon as we express our willingness to bear new taxation, our duty is over. The rest will have to be done by Government. From this point of view, therefore, I wish to state that people will like great retrenchment in the administration expenses to be carried out before any new taxation is undertaken to make up the deficit. And after satisfactory retrenchment, people will be quite willing to bear the new burden that may be necessary. As regards the lines on which new taxation should be distributed, I should suggest that a part should be recovered by direct or indirect taxation, as may be found suitable, from those who will receive direct benefit from prohibition such as great employers of labour and the labourers themselves. The remainder may be distributed over the whole community who will be willing to bear a burden for reclaiming their brethren from the evils of drink.

As regards the actual items of taxation, frankly speaking, I do not think I can make any valuable suggestions. However I may put before the committee some of my crude ideas in this matter. Retrenchment will be the first item which I shall mention. As regards retrenchment, I am prepared to go so far that, except education, all other activities of Government may for the present be slackened until our financial balance has been recovered without the aid of the drink revenue. In fact, I have always thought that the methods of the spending Departments of Government ought to be overhauled; and the expenses be strictly limited to works of only *very wide* public utility. All works of local utility may, for the present, be suspended. The next item to which I shall look for making up the loss will be our forests. They are an expanding asset of revenue and all the increase therein may be earmarked for the deficit in Excise revenue. I am confident that with proper development of forests, a large part of the deficit in Excise may be made up in a few years. The third item I would suggest would be a small tax, analogous to income tax, on all incomes from 500 upwards. To avoid any technical difficulties it may be called a profession tax and may be levied by professions. Care must however be taken to see that it is levied in very small proportion as not to be felt to be a burden. Amusements like cinemas, dramas, tamashas and other small amusements at fairs, etc., may be taxed. Direct taxation on factories according to the number of employees may be assessed. Toddy tax will remain and will, if carefully worked up, prove a great help. Finally, a general tax on the means of locomotion or a tax on travel may be devised. This last tax will reach every person except the poorest who never uses even a cart. Succession duties are a possible source of revenue, likely to be very fruitful. But they may involve nice questions of law. It will be some time before any workable scheme is framed. I, however, think that succession duties are bound to come and so it will be advisable to take the question in hand in connection with the loss in drink revenue. These are my suggestions as regards taxation. I must reiterate that they are crude and they may be taken for what they are worth. My great point in this connection is that it is the business of Government to adjust taxation to the needs and circumstances of the country according to the mandate which they receive from the people.

16. Unless you prohibit the use of opium, hemp drugs and every other intoxicant, prohibition of liquor only would do no good. In fact, it would be nugatory. Some people have an idea that *bhang* in small quantities has a healthy influence. As a temperance man I cannot allow the use of any drug that is intoxicating and renders a human being unable to control himself. But, even apart from that, this idea about *bhang* is I think not well founded. People have the

same idea about wine. I should therefore prohibit every intoxicating drug unless there is unimpeachable testimony about the innocuous nature of any drug.

17. The custom of giving opium to children is gradually going down; and now it is generally confined to the lower classes, many of whom have to resort to opium because they want their infants not to be troublesome during the work hours.

As regards the effect of this custom on the death-rate I have no definite knowledge.

In this connection I have to state that, in any case, we shall have for some time at least, to take account of this custom amongst the lower classes and to make due provision for it.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. THAKAR replied to the President:—"I believe that Indian sentiment is practically prepared to take to total prohibition cheerfully. Four-fifths of the Indians are in favour of prohibition.

"I do not think that the drink evil has assumed any appreciable magnitude in rural areas in the districts of Satara, Poona, Nagar, Sholapur and Nasik. There will be some difficulty in connection with prohibition so far as the districts of Kolaba and Ratnagiri are concerned, as some of the people living there are rather backward and are addicted to drink for generations.

"Instead of the rationing of shops, the rationing of drunkers will be of great use. Some registration system, which may be found suitable by executive authorities, should be brought into operation. I cannot conceive of any other arrangement of which non-drinkers not take advantage.

"Taking into consideration the figures published by Government, I find that consumption of liquor has not increased beyond what is consistent with the increase of population.

"I think that local option ought to be fully and properly worked out for attaining the end of prohibition.

"I am in favour of total prohibition for the natives of India. Liquor should be made available to Europeans only in the Presidency without any chance of creating a loop-hole through which it may be illicitly obtained by other people. I would suggest that, as the Europeans in the Presidency do generally belong to some one of the well-known clubs, these clubs may be recognized by the Central Board and permits may be issued to them to obtain a certain quantity of liquor throughout the year. The club authorities will be held strictly responsible for the distribution of the liquor. For those who do not belong to a club permits may be issued to obtain a certain amount of supply from a licensee. I would not extend this concession to Americans, Italians, Germans, Indian Christians and Parsis. I would depend upon this system till the end of five years, and then will decide whether I should continue this system or put a stop to it.

"All matters about policy and organization and other general questions in connection with the attainment of total prohibition will be settled by the Central Board to be formed on the lines suggested in my printed evidence. Legislative bodies will be too cumbrous to do this business.

"To begin with, illicit distillation is bound to increase among Bhils and Surat Dangs in West Khandesh and Surat respectively; this cannot be denied. District Committees will deal with this illicit distillation by intensive temperance propaganda; and, in the beginning, instead of curtailing the expenditure, more money will have to be spent in keeping up the Excise Department to prevent such illicit distillation.

"I do not know whether illicit liquor is more harmful than licit liquor.

"The difficulty about illicit distillation will be gradually solved during the period of, five years after which total prohibition will be brought in full force.

"In cities there will not be any illicit distillation.

"Total prohibition ought to be brought into operation in big towns first where the drink evil has immensely increased.

"Extremely backward classes may be exempted for the time being, so far as total prohibition is concerned.

"I cannot conceive any other method of stopping the consumption of liquor except by direct legislation. I have no faith in caste regulations. They do not work properly at all.

"I recommend that the Central Board may be allowed to frame a workable scheme of local option to be put into practice by them as one of the methods by which total prohibition may be attained within five years.

"I think that the rationing system is workable. So long as drink is partially allowed, the ration register will have to be kept up.

"I do not think that the means referred to in question no. 10 would bring about the desired end, *namely,* total prohibition. They might be resorted to, during the period of the first five years, as subsidiary means.

"Foreign liquor ought to be prohibited absolutely, except for the use of Europeans. The question of fresh toddy will be left untouched. I would encourage the use of fresh toddy. Fresh toddy is less harmful. The lesser the percentage of alcohol in it the better. Toddy taken out early in the morning should be consumed in the evening.

"People will be prepared to bear the burden of additional taxation if they will be satisfied that the evil of drink is being eliminated. The agriculturist population will be willing to have a little more tax on land. I have ascertained this fact from the agriculturists, who will be willing to bear a little additional burden if this evil of drink is altogether stopped.

"I would certainly advocate levying court fees on the original side of the High Court.

"I am not in favour of giving any right to municipalities and local boards as they are constituted at present."

To Mr. Baker :—"If drink were stopped altogether Government will have the moral satisfaction, though they will have to suffer a financial loss. It is my positive belief that even drunkards will ask Government in their sober moments to remove temptations and inducements from their way to save them from this evil of drink.

"Fresh toddy is not harmful. Fresh toddy contains a very low percentage of alcohol. Beer also does not contain a high percentage of alcohol. I shall not allow the use of beer to wean the people away from drink, as it is an alcoholic drink after all and far more expensive than toddy. I cannot say whether a man who can get drunk by beer can also get drunk by lemon."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"Foreign liquor should go as early as possible, except for the use of Europeans."

To Dr. Patil :—"Twenty-three should be the age limit, because the licensee is always likely to over-estimate the age of his customer."

To Mr. Mehta :—"I am not in favour of giving opium to children. Being a revenue matter, the excise is jealously guarded. I myself tried to go in liquor shops to find out some information, but I was not officially permitted by the authorities to enter the premises of liquor shops.

"The drink habit was almost unknown among the higher classes in the times of the Peshwas. The drink evil was confined to the lowest strata of society and even amongst them it must not have attained extensive proportions because drunkenness as such was punishable as a crime.

"In order to show that drink was made punishable during the times of the Peshwas, I cite the authority printed in page 245, Supplement to the *Gazette of India,* March 1890, and also passages from Mount Stuart Elphinstone's Report on the territories conquered from the Peshwa."

To Mr. Madon :—(Mr. Madon referred witness to one of the extracts* he had put in and asked if it was not a reasonable inference that if drink was prohibited at the time named it must have been prevalent before such prohibition. To this the witness replied.)

"Not at all. I believe these were new districts recently conquered to which the law was being applied and that it gave no ground for the inference that drink was permitted under the Peshwas. In any case the extract showed that the Peshwas attempted to apply prohibition even to such hard-drinking communities as the Bhandaries."

In reply to a further question witness said :—

"The date of that extract was probably 1775-76, at the time of Savai Madhavrao."

*An extract† from the Peshwa's Diary.*

(A true copy of an extract from page 300, Book No. 6 of the Volume of Extracts from the Peshwa's Diary printed and published by the late Rao Bahadur Ganesh Bhimnaji Vad.)

| Page. | Diary of the Peshwa Savai Madhavrao. |
|---|---|
| 300 | |
| | 4. OTHER TAXES. |
| | (f) *Abkari.* |
| 787—(270)<br>(Hijri) 1176<br>Muharram 1. | Sanad issued in the name of Balaji Ganesh (to the effect) that as orders have been issued to prohibit toddy drawing from the cocoanut trees which are reserved to yield spirit in Deogad Taluka, it may be prohibited from the beginning of the next year. |

* *Vide infra.*

† Produced by Mr. Thakar.

SANAD 1.

*Permission in oral.*

Page.

Diary of the Peshwa Sávai Madhavrao.

788—(271)—
(Hijri) 1176
Muharram 1.

Sanad issued in the name of Gangadhar Govind as follows :—The letter sent by you has been received and the contents noted in detail. The drawing of toddy from trees reserved for yielding spirit in the taluka of Vijayadurg had been prohibited with effect from last year. Accordingly the departmental revenue has come short. It is credited to the Behadas* this year. In reply, therefore, to your reference asking whether or not the prohibition should be withdrawn, this sanad is issued to you to say that this year the prohibition should not be withdrawn if it is in force from the beginning of this year, and should be enforced from the beginning of the next year if it is not now in force.

* A certain public paper for the guidance of Mamlatdars and containing a statement of all regular receipts and all fixed disbursemea

SANAD 1.

*Permission in oral.*

789—(893)—
(Hijri) 1186
Ramzan 21.

Indo-Portuguese and Indian Christian soldiers or public servants have been (recently) employed by Sayd Ahmad Gardi on behalf of Ragho Vishwanath ; they always require *phul-sara* (liquor). So, if the Firanghees will distil liquor for their own consumption they should be allowed to do so ; and not be prohibited. The revenue accruing from the liquor will be credited to the state.

GHASHIRAM SAVALADAS,

Kamavisdar, Kotwali, Poona City.

SANAD 1.

*Forwarding Endorsement.*

*Extract* from the Satara Rajas' and the Peshwas' Diaries.*

VI Savai Madhavrao Peshwa, Volume 2, page 300.

IV OTHER TAXES.

*(F) Tax on manufacture of liquor.*

(787) The officer of Taluka Deogad was directed to stop the manufacture of liquor from cocoanut trees from the beginning of the next year.

(788) Similar order was issued to the officer of Taluka Vijayadurg.

(789) Some Portuguese and some Christians were employed under Sayad Ahmed Khan Gardi who was serving under Ragho Vishwanath. They always required liquor for consumption ; permission was, therefore, given to allow them to distil liquor for their present use. The duty on the manufacture was to be levied by Ragho Vishwanath for Government and Ragho was to be held responsible for the liquor so prepared passing into the hands of persons other than Portuguese.

*Extract* from the Report on the Territories conquered from the Peshwa by the Hon'ble Mounstuart Elphinstone.*

*Moral character of the people (page 55, paragraph 3).*

I may here say something of the moral character of the people. Falsehood in all shapes pervades all ranks, and adultery and prostitution are common in the upper classes ; but in them alone. Drunkenness, the peculiar vice of the lower orders, is almost unknown in the Maharatta country which has thence a decided superiority in morals over the old provinces. It arises from the discouragement to the sale of spirituous liquors ; and as the revenue from that source is insignificant, we should probably do well to prohibit it altogether. Public opinion and, above all, the opinion of the caste and the dread of expulsion are the restraints on vices. These powers are, in the Maharatta country, in the hands of the whole caste. In the Carnatic there are regular censors to each caste called Gunnacharies, besides religious Gooroos invested with great

* Produced by Mr. Thakar.

power. But these institutions are converted into the means of gain, and the morals of the people are there decidedly worse than in the Maharatha country. The other vices are not more rare, and drunkenness is common in addition.

*Extract from "some Notes on the State sale monopoly and subsequent prohibition of Vodka in Russia" by J. Y. Simpson, D. Sc., F. R. S. E.*

The result of the situation was that the wealthier classes drank nothing spirituous, unless when they draw on their cellers filled previously to the prohibition ukase, or as they happened themselves to be proprietors of vineyards in the South, or constituted a small minority who drank secretly on occasions in the larger restaurants that know their clientele, and were prepared to run the risk of conviction for dealing in contraband and the heavy penalties involved. Previous to the war, the class known generally as "intelligentzia" took compartively little in the way of wines and spirits. The merchant class, on the other hand, were considerable consumers of vodka, wines and beer. Under prohibition the vast majority of both these classes took nothing; beer was very little drunk, and wine not at all. The occasional drinker practically disappeared.

No. 49.

REPLIES OF THE DECCAN SABHA.

1. The Deccan Sabha is a political association of 25 years' standing, which has always interested itself in the temperance question and counts among its members several temperance workers, who are formally connected with temperance associations and excise advisory committees.

2. The Sabha feels that the Government's excise policy as sketched in the Government of India's Resolution, Finance Department, no. 5000 Exc. of 7th September 1905 does not put a sufficiently stringent check upon intemperance. Instead of directing its efforts to the prevention of excessive alcoholic indulgence, the State may well make it the aim of its excise policy to bring about total abstinence. The Sabha is thus in favour of absolute prohibition.

Nor is the Sabha satisfied that the method followed by Government, *viz.*, a high excise, is calculated by itself to effect the end which Government has in view. The utmost that can be claimed for the policy so far pursued by Government is that it has not added much to consumption, but it has not diminished consumption either, and what the public now want is that drinking should be considerably reduced and ultimately altogether cease. The enhancement of the duty on liquor often impoverishes people without putting them out of the reach of temptation. And the Sabha wishes to lay particular emphasis upon the fact that whatever remedy is ultimately adopted the present method of checking drunkenness will not answer. It has been unreservedly acknowledged by the Honourable the Minister for Excise that the traditional policy of Government of restraining consumption only by a manipulation of excise duty has failed of effect, and that a direct method must now be devised of attacking the evil. The Deccan Sabha whole-heartedly endorses this conclusion and suggests that the most effective direct method that can be thought of is prohibition.

3. The Sabha would recommend the adoption of prohibition and recognises that a period of something like ten years must be allowed within which to replace the excise income by other suitable taxes. As an *interim* measure, the Sabha would suggest the constitution of licensing boards in municipal towns with a population of over 10,000. The boards should be composed somewhat as those in the United Provinces are composed, and should have the power of determining the number and location of excise shops and also of granting licenses, and rationing liquor and drugs. In order to ensure that there will not be a too sudden financial disorganisation, it would not be wrong to put a limit upon the power of the licensing boards to reduce the total supply of exciseable articles by more than one-third in the period of three years when they are in office. If Government feels competent to face a larger sacrifice of revenue, it may itself effect a greater reduction of consumption, or permit the licensing boards to do so. This will secure, in the first place, that the regulation of the traffic in articles of excise in any area will always conform to, and indeed come about as a consequence of, the ascertained wishes of the local public, and, in the second place, it will give a sufficient breathing time to Government to adjust its revenues before prohibition is enforced. In rural areas and in towns with a population of less than 10,000, the Sabha would recommend that Government should itself ration the supply of liquor, reducing it every year by 10 per cent.

5. All the difficulties mentioned in this section are real, but they are not insurmountable. They must be overcome as they have been overcome in countries which have gone dry.

(*a*) It is often asserted that India abounds in a special degree with articles from which liquor can be manufactured illicitly, and that therefore the suppression of illicit distillation is attended in this country with difficulties which are not to be met with elsewhere. The Sabha believes that there is no warranty for such a statement. Every country has, and must have, in common use many articles from which it is possible to produce spirits, but the preventive establishment should be able to cope with this difficulty. This difficulty is not peculiar to prohibition : it is common to all plans for regulating the traffic. The present Abkari Act has such minute provisions in regard to the storing up of mhowra flowers. If these can be enforced, it is difficult to understand why it should be impossible to give effect to a prohibition law.

(*b*) The State should persevere with its efforts to lease the excise administration of Indian states and to have a shopless zone of three miles. Those who know anything of Indian states know in what manifold ways the British Government can and does exercise influence on them. If an earnest attempt is made in the above direction, there is no reason why it should fail. But even supposing it becomes impracticable to have a shopless zone in some instances, even then it is not a fatal objection to prohibition, for *exhypothesi* it will only mean that the three miles of British territory abutting on the Indian states borders will not derive a full advantage from the prohibitory law.

(*c*) No country affords such favourable conditions for experimenting upon prohibition as India. Here the popular sentiment is wholly in favour of prohibition, religious injunctions forbid, the use of spirituous liquors even in moderate quantities and drinking is regarded not only as a vice, but as a sin. This is the first favourable circumstance. Another is, that in this country no one feels such a strong aversion to State regimentation even in matters touching the minutiæ of domestic life as in Western countries. This latter circumstance, whether good or bad in itself, certainly promises a smooth operation for the law of prohibition. If even in the United States of America prohibition is fully well enforced—and there is ample independent testimony to establish this—it must be infinitely easier to enforce it in India. However, if it is thought necessary in the initial stages to exclude Bhils, Kolis and such like people addicted to drinking from the scope of prohibition, the Sabha would raise no objection.

(*d*) All that the Sabha can suggest is that stricter and better supervision should be exercised.

(*e*) In the United States of America it is found that people are not substituting drugs for liquor. As one competent judge has observed, after studying the conditions in America after the introduction of prohibition, drugs and drinks are not rivals and alternatives, but allies. And the Sabha has no reason to believe that the experience in India will be different from what it has been in the United States.

6. There is not the shadow of a doubt that, even if prohibition is not successful with the first generation, it will be successful with the next. The writer whose opinion has been quoted in the preceding paragraph writes of America : " What appears to be happening is a liquidation of thirst among those who already have it without the thirst being renewed among the younger generation that is growing up to take their place. " Evidence is unanimous on this point.

7. Legislation would be the best remedy.

8. The answer to this is supplied in 2.

9. This question does not arise.

10. As the Sabha advocates prohibition, it is unnecessary to refer to methods suggested here of controlling consumption, except to say that it approves of all of them and considers that they may be adopted as may be found advisable. But one point has to be emphasised. In too many cases drunkenness is only a consequence of the hard conditions of life—overwork, bad housing conditions, lack of nutritive food, etc. To attack the evil of drink, therefore, in its entirety, the State must do its best to level up these conditions in every way. It must also provide counter-attractions like tea-houses, theatricals, and so forth and also carry on a vigorous official propaganda against alcoholism.

11 to 13. Unnecessary to answer.

14. It has.

15. The sources of revenue the Sabha would suggest are all or any of the following :—

(1) Death duties or succession duties.

(2) Tax on entertainments, including tax on receipts from totalizators. (In Bengal, the new tax on entertainments includes a tax on betting.)

(3) Court-fees on suits instituted in the Original Side of the Bombay High Court.

(4) A tax on cotton mills regulated according to the number of operatives employed in the mills, say, Rs. 25 per employee per annum.

16. The suggestions made in 3 in regard to licensing boards and rationing are meant to apply to opium and hemp drugs as well as liquor. In the United Provinces also the licensing boards are put in charge of all exciseable articles.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. LIMAYE, on behalf of Deccan Sabha, replied to the President :—" There are 200 members in the Deccan Sabha. The views expressed in the printed evidence were considered in a meeting of the Sabha, specially called for this purpose. The sub-committee drafted the replies which were presented to all members, who also expressed their concurrence with them.

" I think that legislation is a better remedy for prohibition of drink than local option which depends on the sentiments of the people, which are liable to constant changes. Prohibition of drink is feasible within 10 years. I would work it out by rationing shops. I would do it by a system of rationing liquor shops in rural areas and a system of restricted local option in urban areas.

" For further elucidation of the terms " restricted " and " local option " please refer to answer given to question 3.

"The Sabha would raise no objection if it is thought necessary in the initial stages to exclude Bhils, Kolis and such like people addicted to drinking from the scope of prohibition."

To Mr. Baker :—"The Sabha is not prepared to ignore Konkanis.

"There will be some difficulty in the case of Indian States, but that can be got over. Public opinion is in favour of prohibition in these States also."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"The Sabha feels that both education and prohibition should go side by side."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"The Sabha feels that in India unrestricted local option would be tantamount to total prohibition, especially in the district of Maharashtra. The Sabha wants to bring total prohibition into operation within 10 years. The Sabha is prepared to restrict local option to the representatives of the people, *i.e.*, it should be exercised indirectly."

To Mr. Mehta :—"I think Indian States will also adopt the policy of the British so far as the drink problem is concerned."

*Extract from the issue of the "Servant of India", dated the 30th March 1922, produced by Mr. K. G. Limaye on behalf of the Deccan Sabha, Poona.*

AMERICA'S TWO DRY YEARS.

In the discussions now going on in all the provinces regarding the future policy of India, the one uncertain element which confronts those with whom it rests to shape that policy is the success or non-success which has attended Prohibition in the United States. Curiously enough, the protagonists on both sides appeal to the experience of America and draw conclusions therefrom in support of the particular view which they hold and, what is more, that statistics put forward by either seem at the first blush to justify it completely. The truth is that the accounts which we usually receive from America of the results which have flowed from this her great venture are so obviously coloured by a bias either in favour of or against Prohibition that they afford really very little help to an impartial student of this question. Fortunately in P. W. Wilson's account—some excerpts from which are given below—we have a story upon which reliance can be placed, for the writer does not start with any preconception and has no particular thesis to prove or disprove. He was specially commissioned to prepare a report on the entire question of Prohibition for the consideration of social students in the United Kingdom, and this commission, it will be seen, has been executed with ability and in a thoroughly dispassionate spirit. The following passages of the report, therefore, will be found as instructive as they are interesting; but the whole report, being a weighty and authoritative contribution to the discussion of the subject, is well worth perusal by temperance workers.

In the past there have been four methods for taking stimulants or narcotics: first as beer, secondly as wine, thirdly as spirits, and lastly as drugs. Beginning with beer, I find that by general admission commercial brewing has ceased. Some months ago there was a decision allowing such brewing to be renewed for medical purposes only, but Congress has since forbidden this by legislation—the Willis-Campbell Act. With the disappearance of the legal saloon there is no means of distributing beer, owing to its bulk, and the only question that remains is to what extent there has sprung up the practice of brewing beer in the home. Such brewing is both possible and inexpensive, and the most sensational figures have been given for Chicago, New York and other cities to indicate that it is prevalent. These statistics are however estimates only, and it does not appear as if there were any comparison between the volume of beer actually home-brewed and the former supplied by a highly organised, efficiently conducted and legally recognised industry. Home brewing involves trouble. This trouble falls on the housewife. And it is this very housewife who has supported prohibition.

In a country so full of enterprise as is the United States it was inevitable that specialities for home brewing would be advertised and sold. Such brewing is, however, illegal, and if it continues after the novelty has worn off it would be possible for Congress to legislate—if legislation is necessary—against the supply of the prepared ingredients. My belief is that this aspect of the case has been much exaggerated and that in any event it is only of a temporary importance. I am, of course, dealing with the matter, from the standpoint of a British observer, who has to compare the situation with that of his own country, where there are 100,000 liquor licenses for 40,000,000 people. By the side of that fact home brew in the United States is, I am convinced, only a picturesque detail. That some families are so amusing themselves is probable. That inadvertently they may be poisoning themselves is possible, but that the hobby will develop in years to come seems incredible.

With regard to wine I would say that this seems another detail. While there are amusing stories of alcoholic melons in California and of suspected mincemeat and brandied fruits, the broad fact is that the fermentation of wine as an industry, as in France or Portugal, is not carried on in the United States. Some housewives have for many years prepared their

cordials and they will doubtless continue in some cases still to do this, but, generally speaking, wine can only be replenished by import from Europe. That import is illegal except for sacramental or for medicinal purposes. It is possible that there has been some evasion of the law in both these directions, but recent legislation—the Willis-Campbell Act—forbids further imports until existing stocks in bond are exhausted by permit. It is stated that in 1920 France exported 8,000,000 bottles of champagne to Britain. To the United States, with more than double the population, the export from France was only 285,000 bottles. This gives each American on the average one bottle of champagne in every 386 years.

On drugs, it is not easy to obtain nation-wide and reliable statistics. There is no doubt that the United States is a country where the patent medicine is universally advertised and consumed. But what may be called the great drug scare occurred in the year 1919 before the Eighteenth Amendment had been applied. Then it was asserted that there were a million drug addicts in the forty-eight states and most alarming figures were presented of the amount of opium and narcotics consumed. These statistics, offered by a Committee investigating for the Treasury, were, however, somewhat discounted by the actual test of the draft for the army, which showed that out of 3,500,000 men there were only 3,120 addicts, or less than 1 in 1,000. Other evidence indicated that addiction is fairly evenly distributed between men and women, and that it particularly assails the young person. The military result was thus to be accepted as typical.

I can find no proof and hardly any serious assertion that the absence of drink has driven any considerable number of persons to drugs. Reports from many states are to some extent conflicting, but apparently it is agreed that the danger of drug is greatest in the big cities, where the danger of alcoholism is also most apparent, and that drugs and drink are therefore not rivals and alternatives but allies.

The success or failure of prohibition does not depend on either wine or drugs, which are, once more, details, but on spirits. If the people have only turned from beer in order to consume whisky, and bad whisky at that, the reform will have done more harm than good.

The proposition that there has been any increase in the consumption of spirits is, I cannot but think, wholly wide of the mark. The utmost that can be alleged, is that this consumption in certain areas has not been stamped out, and the quality of the spirits consumed has deteriorated. In the aggregate, the volume of " hootch " put down the human throat in the United States is a mere fraction of what it was before the Amendment came into effect. Of this estimate, enormous increase in price may be taken as an infallible proof. While there are places still wide open, their number is comparatively few, compared with the saloons and the bars available in the old days—and it is understood that injunctions will now be resorted to by the agents. There are no advertisements of liquor in the press. No sky-signs announce a favourite label. And the label on the bottle now tells nothing as to its contents. The very fact that substitutes of every kind, some of them sheer poison, are too freely imbibed show how rare is the real stuff. Liquor has ceased to be a commodity and has become a valuable. It is now worth while for the bandit to break into one's neighbour's cellar.

To sum up, then, I have reported to Britain that prohibition has come to stay, that it is a policy particularly approved by women, that it has virtually stopped the consumption of beer and has enormously reduced the consumption of wine and spirits, without stimulating, so far as can be discerned, the taste for drugs. I have pointed out the strict attitude assumed by the Supreme Court and by Congress and have further explained the significance if the various evasions, and of the new alcoholism, in its more voilent forms. On the social results of the policy, I seem to find but one responsible opinion, at any rate among employers. Even on Mondays labour is alert and efficient. A wave of unemployment, though possibly exaggerated, has been sufficiently serious to render noticeable an unprecedented absence of distress. Apparently savings bank deposits are rapidly growing and with them the number of depositors' accounts. According to insurance companies there have been several years added recently to the expectation of life among persons holding their policies. If I remember rightly, a remarkable fall in infant mortality has occurred in New York, some thousands of babies' lives being saved. From several sources and several cities I have information, apprently reliable, that crime has diminished and specially crimes of passion and violence. One hears of a lumber can in Michigan and an Italian quarter in Long Island being similarly transformed. In one western city for some years dry, I asked in vain for the poor house and the prison. Apparently they had none and the poorhouse or workhouse seemed unfamiliar. I had to explain it. That some employers are applying to the workers a rule against liquor which they do not themselves observe is perfectly true. In that sense there is, for the moment, one law for the rich and another law for the poor. But a " wet " parade, arranged here in New York last summer, was a failure. I can discover no general and popular resentment against the self-denying ordinance, nor any disclination in Europe to emigrate to " Sahara ".

What appears to be happening is a liquidation of thirst among these who already have it without the thirst being renewed among the younger generation that is growing up to take their place. I have in mind two families, in one of which the father and in the other of which the mother

drank at times to excess. In both cases the children are being reared without a taste, and I believe without encountering the smell or the sight of liquor. I cannot but compare such instances with the deplorable scenes outside public house which I witnessed in England only a few weeks ago. Prohibition is not a gospel ; it is simply a law. It does not aim at a positive good. It does negative considerable evils. Whether Britain will easily adopt this policy I am still very doubtful. Britain is to day wetter than the wettest State of the Union before prohibition went into effect. If, however, Britain once gets hold of the big facts she may move quickly. She would then have land frontier to watch and no forests and mountains on the American scale. Britain, once dry, might be thus more dry than the United States. That, however, is prophesy, and for the moment Britain has to be convinced.

## No. 50.

### Replies of Mr. S. G. LAWATE of Poona.

1. I have lately taken to begging as a means of livelihood but I spend some of my time in temperance work.

I have been, as a temperance worker for the last 15 years or so, an observer of Government Excise policy, its actual working and its effects on the people; my observations are mainly limited to the four Deccan districts, *namely*, Poona, Ahmednagar, Sholapur and Satara.

2. (*a*) The Government Excise policy as was laid down by the Supreme Government in 1905 is in my opinion faulty; but even as it is, it has not been faithfully followed.

(*b*) The actual result of that policy as it has been carried out in practice is disastrous to hundreds of families every year. But even the present Excise administration observes certain restrictions and, so far as they go, a sort of check is exercised on too much indulgence.

3. I think it is Government's duty to see that alcohol is used only for medicinal purposes, and not utilized to make a beverage. Moderate drinking should be discouraged altogether. Government must never allow a shop to be located in any place unless three-fourths of the adult inhabitants of the locality demand its existence in writing.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition, because I think it will conduce to the people's welfare morally, socially, and economically. It is quite a practical measure, at least so far as the central districts of Maharashtra are concerned, and it is by the grant of local option that prohibition can be achieved within quite a reasonable period of time.

5. (*a*) The facility is made much of and is in my opinion quite a negligible quantity.

(*b*) There is no such fear so far as the four Deccan districts are concerned and in my opinion Indian States would gladly follow British example if only a little encouraged.

(*c*) The habits acquired by certain classes of people will vanish in a few years and there is absolutely no possibility of any sort of discontent arising among the people.

(*d*) There is no fear of illicit distillation in Maharastra proper and the temptation to levy illegal exactions should, I think, be adequately dealt with by Government itself.

(*e*) It is confidently expected that the fear will prove much less serious than is imagined in certain quarters.

6. Prohibition will be effective both immediately and in time to come.

7. The object can be obtained by granting the right of local option.

8. Yes. However, fresh toddy should not be prohibited.

9. Absolute prohibition is both feasible and desirable.

10. The method of peaceful persuasion commonly called picketing would in addition to other means materially reduce consumption.

11. I am. Every adult in each locality should have a vote, and the majority of three-fourths of the voters should be considered as decisive.

12. I am in favour of investing the elected members of these bodies with the power, until any prohibitive measure is adopted or local option granted. But I would not make these bodies responsible for raising revenue.

13. They, by their very constitution, cannot be useful. To make them useful, they must be given executive powers with elected majority.

14. It does increase crime and affect output of work.

15. I would leave the question to be solved by professional financiers: but, if it comes to that, I would submit to any other taxation than the one now in vogue in the form of duty on liquor.

16. Cultivation in British area should be stopped and importation prohibited. In the meantime, healthy public opinion should be created.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent among backward classes. As a layman I cannot answer the second part of the question.

---

### ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. LAWATE replied to the President:—"I have been a temperance worker for the last 15 years. During my temperance work of 15 years I have been preaching temperance to the masses in public places whenever a suitable occasion presents itself to me.

"Berads, Mahars, Marathas and Malis are all addicted to drinking. My activities are confined to places round about cities, Poona City and the district as a whole.

"All drunkards agree in theory that drinking is bad ; but when they see drink before them, their passions get the better of them and go on drinking as usual. Drunkards have never revolted against any attempt at weaning them from the evil of drink. I have weaned up to now about 100 men from this evil. I have done this by giving general lectures. I have got cards with me signed by drunkards to the effect that they will not drink at all. When once they take an oath, they try to keep to it in any circumstance.

"I am of opinion that illiteracy has to do something with drink. The temperance cause will be helped to some extent, if the masses are educated. But as I find that even educated people are addicted to drinking, I do not think that education as such will have any effect in weaning the masses as a whole from this vice. The eradication of the vice must certainly be tried independently of education.

" Drunkards generally put forth three causes for taking liquor, *viz.* :—

(1) They believe that they forget their cares under the influence of liquor.

(2) They are of opinion that plague will not effect them so long as they will go on drinking.

(3) By drinking they alleviate the miseries, toils and fatigue of the day.

" Coffee and tea will have some exhilarating effect if drunkards will take to them. The chief complaint of the drunkards is that they cannot resist the temptation of drink when it is placed in their way, and Government is to be blamed for it. If the temptation of drink be removed from their way, the drink evil will practically be non-existent in the rural areas of the Deccan districts. The drink problem will have to be seriously considered so far as towns are concerned.

" Absolute prohibition is both feasible and desirable. About 100 years ago there was no drink in the Maharashtra. The Peshwas had absolutely no revenue from Excise from the four Deccan districts. They were having Rs. 10,000 from coast districts. For this statement I rely upon Major Bell's report of 1868 and also upon the Manual by the late Justice Ranade. One hundred years ago mhowra flowers may have been used for distilling liquor for troops, and not for any other people. In the districts of Poona, Ahmednagar, Satara and Sholapur I consider illicit distillation as a myth. There is an absence of mhowra flowers and also of raw materials for illicit distillation in the districts of Satara, Poona, Ahmednagar and Sholapur. I do not think that there are any facilities for illicit distillation in these districts. Illicit distillation prevails only in the districts of Thana and Kolaba. Even if there be any illicit distillation that can be put a stop to by having more preventive establishment. I do not think that this will cause any trouble. During the last picketing in Poona the police were without any work. So far as this part is concerned there was no case of rowdyism even when the work of picketing was carried on. I admit the correctness of the statement that illicitly distilled liquor must be more harmful than licit liquor.

" I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. Even though the right of local option be given to drunkards, they will vote against drink.

" From my contact with several of the communities I am of opinion that they will be quite willing to get themselves taxed even if it comes to that and if they are convinced that this evil of drink is completely being eradicated by the Government."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I consider that prohibition is practical. So long as the liquor shop is there, a drunkard cannot resist the temptation.

" People must be ready to bear any kind of taxation, if the evil of drink is altogether taken away.

" If I am asked to make a selection between the two alternatives, ' prohibition of liquor ' and ' primary education ', I would prefer to abolish the evil of drink first and then think of primary education."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" Unadulterated and unfermented toddy is not harmful. Opium produces bad effects."

To Mr. Madon :—" I am of opinion that the whole or any part of the burden of revenue must be borne by provinces in general and not by any particular area. Local bodies may be invested with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. I am for adult suffrage ; in this respect the right of voting might be given even to women.

" Big municipalities like Poona should bear their share of the burden if they are given no other alternative in the application of the principle of local option in their areas."

To Mr. Mehta :—" I do not want Government to force a certain view upon the people."

No. 51.

## REPLIES OF THE POONA TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION.

1. The answers given here are those which have been prepared by the Committee of the Poona Temperance Association, an Association which has long existed and has had, and still has, on its Committee and in its membership Indians and Europeans who have given much thought to this subject and who have sought by every means open to them to advance the cause of temperance. It may be mentioned that among the past members of this Association and leaders in its work have been Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, who was long its President, Mr. G. K. Gokhale, who was long its Vice-President, and Mr. B. G. Tilak.

2. The policy of the Government of Bombay in respect to the consumption of liquor should, in the opinion of this Association, be to get rid entirely of the consumption of liquor as being a material which is destructive to the individual and injurious to the community when used to excess, and which cannot be used, even in moderation, by individuals or communities without injury. Further, its use is contrary to the sentiments of a large majority of the population, who would welcome the abolition of drinking as being in line with the deepest religious convictions of the people of this land. For these two reasons—first, on the general ground of the good of the people and, second, on the ground of the prevailing sentiment of the people—a Government, which desires the good of the governed and which desires to rule in accordance with their wishes, should adopt as its declared policy the removal of this evil by means of a system of prohibition of the traffic, whether that system be brought into operation by a legislative measure applied to the whole Province equally or by a scheme of local option or by any other method, or whether it be decided to make use of several of these methods simultaneously.

3. The change in the policy of Government that this Association advocates is sufficiently indicated above.

4. We are in favour of total prohibition, as already indicated. The reasons for advocating this policy are, briefly (1) that the religious sentiments of the people are opposed to all indulgence in liquor and desire that it be prohibited, (2) that indulgence in liquor is injurious, especially in view of the climate of the greater part of India, and (3) that the economic situation in a country as poor as India is demands that this policy should be adopted. We consider it a thoroughly practical policy and one that practical considerations, that is, considerations of the people's moral, physical, and economic welfare, demand. We suggest the following steps which might be adopted in carrying this policy into operation :—An Act of the Provincial Legislature should be passed prohibiting the traffic either immediately or within a specified period of time. If it is considered necessary that there be such a period, it should not be longer than is required in order to adjust the provincial finances to the new conditions. We are of opinion that this adjustment should be possible within five years.

5. (*a*) In the case of toddy permission might be granted for its sale in booths at the tree-foot for "on" consumption, the period during which these shops are open being so fixed as to secure that the toddy shall not have fermented. If this arrangement is made it should not be impossible to prevent liquor being obtained from the trees by illicit means.

(*b*) This trouble would be limited to a margin of about ten miles on each side of the border. It should not be impossible to control it within that area in view of the fact that there is already a preventive cordon maintained by the Abkari Department round Portuguese territory. This should be continued and, if necessary, strengthened. Further, it is probable that the Indian States would adopt the policy, in this matter, of the Indian Governments. It may be pointed out that this difficulty has been met in America.

(*c*) It is the considered opinion of this Association from experience of many parts of the Presidency that there are very few classes of the people that would seriously object to the total prohibition of, at least, distilled liquor. Even among the classes among whom drinking is more common there has been a temperance movement during the past two years, and it is felt that the best sentiment among these people also would be in favour of legislation such as we suggest.

(*d*) If prohibition were adopted the ordinary police would be able to meet not only their present duties, which would in consequence be reduced, but also those of the preventive establishment. In this way a special preventive establishment would not be required.

(*e*) In Poona there was a small increase in the sale of drugs during the picketing period but it was very much less in proportion than the diminution in the sale of liquor. Experience in America shows that this is not a danger that need be taken into consideration.

6. It will certainly have an increased influence on the next generation.

7. The members of this Association are entirely agreed on the desirability of extinguishing this traffic as soon as possible. To attain that end some of our number would press for the enactment by the Legislature, without delay, of a law prohibiting the traffic throughout the

Province, their conviction being that the opinion of the electors on the question is clear and that they need not be directly consulted. Others consider that the end should be reached by the enactment of a law, giving an opportunity to the people to decide whether and how the traffic should be extinguished. Whichever of these two methods is adopted, other methods of a subsidiary character, such as the education of the people in temperance, rationing of shops, etc., should be adopted simultaneously as helping towards the end in view. This Association does not, however, consider that these can in any way be accepted as substitutes for the legislative measures above indicated.

8. This Association consider, as indicated above, that the sale of fresh toddy should not be prohibited; on the contrary it may be encouraged. They are not averse to complete prohibition being reached by two stages, the first being prohibition of distilled liquor, and the second that of fermented liquors.

9. This question has already been answered seeing that complete prohibition is in our view the end to be set before us.

10. It being understood that this Association holds that, if prohibition is brought about by legislation for the whole Province simultaneously, the limit of time within which that is being brought about should not be more than five years, then the means of controlling consumption that are suggested here should be made use of during that interval. These means, however, should be made use of only with a view to bringing about that end. In reference to the means enumerated this Association holds in the case of (*h*) that no temporary licenses should be granted in the case of (*i*) that the age limit should be 18, and in the case of (*j*) that this method should not be made use of as being objectionable.

11. For the answer to this question see what has been said above.

12. This Association, holding strongly as it does that the control of this traffic should be either in the hands of the representatives of the people or even directly in the hands of the people themselves, urges that the power of determining the number and location of shops should be entrusted to the elected members only of local bodies. These local bodies, so constituted, should have power to regulate the number and location of shops and the hours during which the shops can remain open, under such limitations as shall be in agreement with the general policy adopted by the Legislature.

If local option is adopted as the method to be employed for deciding whether the traffic shall be ended in any locality, this Committee urges that this question should be placed before the electors for their decision immediately after each election to those local bodies has been held. Thus a referendum on this subject will be called for automatically at stated intervals.

As regards the second part of this question—whether the area should be made responsible for raising any part of the revenue sacrificed—this Association holds that no such charge should be placed upon a local area in case of reduction by those local bodies of the number of shops. As to whether a certain proportion of the cost of totally extinguishing the traffic under local option should be borne by the areas deciding to extinguish the traffic, the Association is divided in opinion; some holding that the entire burden should be borne by the whole Province and that no descrimination should be made between districts adopting the policy of prohibition and those declining to do so, while others would be willing that a proportion of the loss incurred—not more than one half—should be locally borne.

13. Experience shows that committees that are merely advisory are of no use at all. They must have executive power if they are to be taken seriously.

14. To the first part of this question this Association answers unhesitatingly, Yes. It has no experience upon which to base its reply to the second half of the question, but scientific investigation has made it clear that drink reduces the quality and quantity of work done.

15. The present excise revenue is contrary to all sound economic principles because, while it is one of the largest sources of revenue, it is obtained from the poorer classes of the community. This Association therefore holds that it should not be difficult so to readjust taxation that it shall be based on sounder economic principles. We are not in a position to frame such a scheme of taxation. We are, however, prepared to face the additional taxation that may be necessary in order to bring the traffic to an end. This Association is convinced that such a policy is economically sound and will prove to be beneficial to the whole body of the people, ultimately lightening the burdens of taxation. The Association feels that it is the duty of Government to adjust taxation to the general principles that are laid down by the people whose servants they are.

16. Any measure which shall restrict the use of these drugs should be welcomed.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Messrs. LAWATE and THAKAR, on behalf of the Poona Temperance Association, replied to the President :—" There are 100 members in the Association. All communities are represented on the Association, including Europeans, Parsis, Marathas, Malis and even drinking communities. The Association was founded in 1907.

"The replies were drafted by the Managing Committee, which had some 13 or 15 members, and they were approved by all the members of the Association.

"The Association is in favour of total prohibition within five years. They are in favour of prohibition by stages.

"During picketing days there must have been some rise in the sale of foreign liquor. Some people must have been drinking even during the picketing days.

"Foreign liquor should be altogether stopped except in the case of Europeans; the prohibition will only be applicable in the case of natives of India. Europeans will never lower themselves so as to supply liquor to Indians.

"Our Association is violently against having any subsidy from Government for the promotion of temperance; but individually we are not against receiving any help from Government.

"Advisory Committees only give us an opportunity of discussing matters in connection with the location and reduction of liquor shops and hours of sale. They are merely advisory and of no use at all. Recommendations are, if ever, only partially listened to."

To Mr. Baker :—"The British Government can exercise some influence in the case of Indian States and request them to adopt the policy of prohibition on the British lines in their areas, as it does in some other matters.

"We are prepared to have land revenue raised, if it comes to that. One way it will be an imposition. When a man once is a slave to alcohol, that in itself is an imposition."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"We shall be glad if prohibition were applied to Europeans also. But as they do not think that drinking is an evil and as their opposition would endanger the success of our proposals, we shall let them alone for some time until they realize the benefits of prohibition."

To Mr. Mehta :—"There were certain members on the Executive Committee of our Association who were strongly of opinion that prohibition by legislation was the best remedy; others thought that local option was the best remedy; while others again expressed an opinion to the effect that in case total prohibition was not coming on by legislation, local option was the next best."

No. 52.

REPLIES OF MR. R. G. SOMAN, PLEADER, SATARA.

I am a pleader by profession but having moved among the masses and being interested in the drink question I have had opportunities of forming an opinion on the questions. I was also interested in the picketing movement carried on last year.

2. (*a*) The policy of Government as quoted is no doubt well intentioned, though it seems objectionable that Government should show so much solicitude for the few drinkers who may either be moderate or confirmed drunkards. In India the drink habit is considered to be a vice and an evil and hence no foreign Government can well appreciate this spirit and hence this undeserved solicitude.

(*b*) People also firmly believe that the policy, as it is, is not strictly followed in practice. The tax upon liquor is no doubt enhanced but it has not yet been made prohibitive. The fear of inducing illicit distillation and of driving people to other drugs is not as real as it is tried to be made out. The public opinion is not duly regarded in the matter of locating and closing shops. Temptation to non-drinkers is not at all minimised. Greed for revenue is often apparent; the policy has not put an effective check on intemperance.

3. The policy of Government should clearly be to bring about complete prohibition within a period fixed by statute, not in any event exceeding ten years. There should not be the least solicitude shown even for temperate drinkers and all the considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated to this goal. No difficult feature in the administration can justify the support of Government to this vice.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. No reasons need be mentioned specially. When even Americans, the kith and the kin of the British and a nation of drinkers, advocate prohibition, India whose traditions and religions forbid drink must have it. I consider prohibition to be a practical measure. A prohibition law is the first and the best step.

5. (*a*) There are few tracts where there is facility of obtaining liquor by illicit means.

(*b*) There are no Indian States where prohibition cannot be practically enforced. The prohibition by law of importation of liquor, with sufficient fear of penalty is a sufficient safeguard. If at all necessary shops within six miles of the boundary of the district can be closed and supply to other shops can be rationed. This is not impracticable looking to the relations of Government with the Indian States.

(*c*) There are very few classes whose habits will be interfered with, and there is no chance of serious discontent. The good of the greatest part of the population must be the object ignoring those small classes.

(*d*) The necessity of the preventive establishment is unnecessarily made much of. Case of retrenchment in the present establishment can be made out in the present circumstances and therefore in any case no further increase in the establishment is necessary.

(*e*) If intoxicating drugs also are to be provided against, there is no such probability.

6. Prohibition will certainly have a large influence on the next generation. But it will be effective even against the spread of this vice in the present generation.

7. Prohibitive legislation is the best means but, in addition, all means of educating public opinion may be resorted to.

8. I would like to apply prohibition to all liquors; if necessary, toddy and shindi may be the last to be prohibited; also, if necessary, sale of foreign liquors by licensed vendors to licensed drinkers other than Indians may for a time be permitted.

9. Absolute prohibition is desirable but, if it is not at once feasible, sale of foreign liquors other than those required for medical purposes be confined only to persons other than Indians. The experiment of prohibition may first be introduced within districts least affected by this evil, gradually extending it to all parts of the Presidency.

10. The means suggested may at once be availed of. Perhaps, even rationing of liquor to individuals may be prescribed. This means that a large quantity ought not to be sold to an individual.

11. Second to prohibition local option seems to be the best remedy. Though direct voting may be the best, local bodies may for practical purposes be taken to represent the people at least for a time.

12. Local bodies ought to be invested with powers even of prohibition; at the same time they ought not to be saddled with any responsibility of revenue. They may, as a part of the general administration, be responsible in a general scheme of taxation if at all necessity for such scheme is made out.

13. So far as I am aware the advisory committees are useless bodies. Unless they are made elected bodies and are made more representative and unless they are given powers of control and inspection, they will remain so. They should have non-official presidents. The

detailed statistics of the department should be opened to such and other public bodies. At present the Excise and Revenue Departments are absolutely indifferent and hostile to public demands.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to an increase of crime and has no advantageous effect (if not otherwise) on the output of work.

15. I have not considered the question from this point of view and I consider it is not my business to do so at present. But if prohibition is to be brought about gradually within certain years, the application of that principle as divided over so many years may be confined to districts after districts without having the necessity of resorting to fresh taxation but only relying upon the scissors of gradual retrenchments. But to my mind any evil of a fresh burden of taxation even is preferable to this evil of drink which is eating into the vitals of Indian society.

16. and 17. I have no special remarks to offer.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. SOMAN replied to the President:—"I have been moving among the masses, am interested in the drink question for the last 22 years and I have come into contact with many people.

"The Ghisadis, the Wadars and the Dhors are all addicted to drinking. Satara is mainly an agriculturist taluka. There are only two liquor-shops in Satara City and one in Cantonment; in all three liquor-shops. There were in all seven shops in 1908-09.

"I am of opinion that the majority of drunkards come from rural areas.

"It was at the instance of the people that the number of liquor-shops has now been reduced to three only when compared to seven in 1908-09.

"There is one foreign liquor-shop.

"I was interested in the picketing movement and I have taken part in it. I do not know whether the sale of foreign liquor had increased during the picketing days. Foreign liquor was not picketed.

"Raising of prices will bring about prohibition to a certain extent. Present rates are not sufficiently high. I am of opinion that they should be out of the reach of the ordinary people.

"There is no illicit distillation in the talukas of Javli and Patan. There were rare cases of illicit distillation. I believe there were 18 cases during the course of the last ten years. The number is so small that it can be considered as practically negligible.

"Toddy and shindi may be left untouched for the time being. In any case toddy ought to be fresh.

"The experiment of prohibition may first be made in districts least affected by this evil of drink; gradually extending it to all parts of the Presidency, in order to avoid financial difficulties. I will surely suggest my own district for this purpose first. I am partial to my own district.

"Rationing of liquor to individuals may be prescribed. This means that a large quantity ought not to be sold to an individual. Tickets of required quantities should be issued to drinkers. I think that a coupon system will be quite feasible.

"I am not opposed to the principle of local option. I think there is no force in the argument that the majority of voters will enforce their will on the minority.

"To begin with, people will demur to pay additional taxation, but when they realize the good effects of prohibition, I think their attitude of unwillingness will be changed.

"So far as cities like Bombay and Poona are concerned, I believe that employers of factory labour may be taxed to a certain extent.

"I am against imposing death duties.

"I am in favour introducing some scale of fees to be paid on the original side of the High Court.

"I shall not grudge an income-tax on incomes over Rs. 500.

"Land Revenue should be increased as the last resource. The agriculturists will be most reluctant to pay any increase."

To Mr. Baker :—"I am in favour of total prohibition. I do not think that any special reasons are necessary to be given for this. When prohibition is worked out even in countries inhabited by drinkers, naturally it goes without saying that a country like India—most of whose population is non-drinking—should pass a resolution prohibiting drink altogether, no special reasons are necessarily required to be given. Public sentiment is in favour of prohibition. As an Indian

I do feel that drink is an evil and it is my Indian mentality, which is, I think, just and sufficient reason."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"In Satara there is no danger of illicit distillation.

"I think that the number of drunkards is increasing from generation to generation.

"I have no faith in the figures published by Government in connection with the average consumption of drink.

"I have to say with regret that Government officers are very unsympathetic when they are requested to furnish us with authentic information. The temperance association had written three or four times to the Collector to have some information but he very politely refused to give it.

(Here the witness handed over the correspondence in connection with his statement about the refusal of the Collector to give him any information).

"The President, District Local Board, also met with the same difficulty when he wanted information to answer the questionnaire of this Committee.

"Satara is an agricultural as well as criminal district. So far as this district is concerned I do not think there will be an appreciable decrease in the number of crimes as they are not mostly the result of drink.

"So long as there is temptation before the drinker, prohibition will not work successfully. I shall prefer prohibition first and defer education for the time being."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"In 1908 there were seven liquor-shops out of which four have since been abolished.

"Reducing the number of liquor-shops alone will not have an appreciable effect.

"I do not say that the consumption of liquor in urban areas is due only to the drinking habits of the urban population; rural population also has a large share in it."

*Statement produced by Mr. Soman showing consumption of liquor in Satara District.*

| Gross Revenue. | Year. | Gallons. | Consumption per head. | Licensees. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2,52,659 | 1908-09 .. .. .. | 39,791 | .... | .. |
| 2,85,266 | 1909-10 .. .. .. | 53,511 | .... | .. |
| 3,27,566 | 1910-11 .. .. .. | 62,514 | .... | .. |
| .. | 1911-12 .. .. | 68,247 | 1·3 Drams .. | .. |
| .. | 1912-13 .. .. .. | 62,305 | ·9 „ .. | .. |
| .. | 1913-14 .. .. .. | 75,897 | 1·2 „ .. | .. |
| .. | 1914-15 .. .. .. | 73,431 | 1·2 „ (approximate) .. | .. |
| 4,54,848 | 1915-16 .. .. .. | 43,709 | 1·1 Do. .. | 23,084 |
| 4,66,710 | 1916-17 .. .. .. | 47,413 | 1·2 Drams .. | 19,894 |
| 6,30,575 | 1917-18 .. .. .. | 47,410 | 1·2 „ .. | 75,409 |
| 6,77,000 | 1918-19 .. .. .. | 34,463 | ·9 „ .. | 1,77,001 |
| 6,88,541 | 1919-20 .. .. .. | 29,201 | ·7 „ .. | 2,03,281 |
| .. | 1920-21 .. .. .. | .. | ·8 „ .. | .. |

*Population in 1911.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Urban .. .. .. .. .. | 81,455 |
| Rural .. .. .. .. .. | 999,823 |
| Total .. .. | 1,081,278 |

Satara District Area, 4,818 square miles.

*Statement produced by Mr. Soman showing consumption of liquor in Satara District per head in dram.*

*Satara.*

| Year. | Urban. | Rural. |
|---|---|---|
| 1911–12 .. .. .. .. | 21·4 | 1·3 |
| 1912–13 .. .. .. .. | 30 | ·9 |
| 1913–14 .. .. .. .. | 17·8 | 1·2 |
| 1914–15 .. .. .. .. | 14·5 | 1·2 |
| 1915–16 .. .. .. .. | 12·2 | 1·1 |
| 1916–17 .. .. .. .. | 11·9 | 1·2 |
| 1917–18 .. .. .. .. | 11·5 | 1·2 |
| 1918–19 .. .. .. .. | 8·6 | ·9 |
| 1919–20 .. .. .. | 6·8 | ·7 |
| 1920–21 .. .. .. .. | 3 | ·8 |

*Durbar questions, 1920, produced by Mr. Soman.*

| Serial No. | Name. | Question. | Collector's reply. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 61 | Mr. D B. Gokhale, Pleader, Satara. | Will the Collector be pleased to state the total number of country liquor-shops in the Satara District in the current year ? | The number of shops is 53, of which 7 are State shops. |
| 62 | Mr. D. B. Gokhale, Pleader, Satara. | Will the Collector be pleased (*a*) to give the total consumption of country liquor in gallons for each of the preceding five years beginning with 1915 ; (*b*) to give the total gross income of the whole Abkari Department for these five years in this district ; (*c*) to give the gross amount of total income derived from the sale of the country liquor-shops ? | (*a*) The total consumption of country liquor *in terms of London proof gallons* during the preceding five years is as under :— |

| Year. | British Shops. | State Shops. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1915-16 .. | 34,545 | 9,164 | 43,709 |
| 1916-17 .. | 36,905 | 10,508 | 47,413 |
| 1917-18 .. | 36,418 | 10,992 | 47,410 |
| 1918-19 .. | 26,079 | 8,384 | 34,463 |
| 1919-20 .. | 21,827 | 7,374 | 29,201 |

(*b*) The gross excise revenue of this district during the five years is as under :—

| Year. | Gross revenue. Rs. |
|---|---|
| 1915-16 .. | .. 4,54,848 |
| 1916-17 .. | .. 4,66,710 |
| 1917-18 .. | .. 6,30,575 |
| 1918-19 .. | .. 6,77,000 |
| 1919-20 .. | .. 6,88,541 |

(*c*) The license fees realized during the five years are given below :—

| Year. | License fees. Rs. |
|---|---|
| 1915-16 | 23,084 |
| 1916-17 | 19,894 |
| 1917-18 | 75,409 |
| 1918-19 | 1,77,001 |
| 1919-20 | 2,03,281 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 63 | Mr. D. B. Gokhale, Pleader, Satara. | Will the Collector be pleased to give the number of meetings held during the last year by the Abkari Committee, the nature of the resolutions proposed by the members of the Committee and if any resolutions were passed, whether all or any of them have been given effect to ? | One meeting of the Local Advisory Committee was convened during the year 1919-20. In this meeting 11 country liquor-shops at the following places were recommended for closure :— 1 Limb, 2 Mahuli, 3 Pala, 4 Charegaon, 5 Kudal, 6 Kavathe, 7 Deur, 8 Pusesavli, 9 Wangli, 10 Akalkhop, 11 Kameri. Also the change of site of the country liquor-shops at Mahableshwar and Morgri was recommended. The Commissioner of Customs, Salt and Excise, Bombay, has sanctioned the closure of 11 shops after the period of three years' license or as soon as they fall in. The shops at Limb, Mahuli and Kameri were closed from 1st April 1920 as they fell in. The remaining eight shops will be closed from 1st April 1921. The question of changing the site of the Mahableshwar shop is still under consideration and the site of the other shop has not been shifted as another suitable site could not be found. |
| 64 | Mr. D. B. Gokhale, Pleader, Satara. | Will the Collector be pleased to state whether the attention of Government or the Abkari Committee has been drawn to the expressed public opinion requesting the closing of the country liquor-shop in Yadogopal Peth, Satara City ? | In the Local Excise Committee held on 15th August 1920 the non-official members proposed to reduce the Machi shop in Yadogopal Peth and if reduction was not possible, change of a site. In this connection Mr. K. R. Majgaonkar, Hon. Secry., District Association, has been informed that 2 shops in Satara City are not excessive for a population of 20,944 and that if his Association can suggest another location for the Machi shop the Collector will be glad to consider it. No such suggestion has been received. |
| 65 | Mr. D. P. Gokhale, Pleader, Satara. | Will the Collector be pleased to issue orders as to the closing of all liquor-shops on Sundays? | The closing of liquor-shops on Sundays would simply result in a considerable loss of revenue from license fees with no corresponding benefit to the public. The public would buy liquor before Sunday and keep it at home. Probably also a surreptitious business in liquor dealing would spring up. The suggestion cannot therefore be approved. |

## No. 53.

### Replies of Mr. SHANKAR BAPAJI SANT, President, Sangamner Municipality.

1. I am a pleader by profession, I am also the President of the Taluka Local Board, Sangamner Taluka, and President of the Sangamner Municipality for nearly 10 years. Sangamner Taluka had one liquor shop at Sangamner and weavers form the principal population of Sangamner took to drinking with a result that; inspite of their industry, they lost everything in drink and remained miserably poor. So I and others of my colleagues appealed to Government officers and district officers asking them to close the liquor shop altogether. We showed them concrete instances of misery resulting from drink by taking them to the abodes of those weavers in the evening when they were drunk and were maltreating the other members of the household. Eventually the Collector of the district was convinced that the closing of the shop would do immense good to the population and so he recommended it to Government and the shop has actually been closed since the 1st April 1921. As a result of that closing of the shop the pecuniary condition of the weavers and others who had taken to drink has much improved and they have appreciated the change very much.

2. I do not approve of the policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001 of 7th September 1905, because I think that Government should not think it its duty to provide for those who are inclined to drink. Raising tax on liquor or regulating the location and number of shops is not likely to do much good, because the vice is such that, provided the man can get the liquor, he would not care as to what price he pays or what other inconveniences he is put to. The raising of the tax only makes his life the more miserable by his having to pay more money for his drink.

3. When I hold that Government should not provide for the drunkard, the only suggestion I can offer is that the traffic should be stopped altogether, either immediately or within a reasonably short time. My suggestion is that the distillation and sale should be reduced 25 per cent. every year. So that within a period of four years the traffic can be stopped altogether without the people who were addicted to drink feeling it as a hardship. The Bombay Government have reduced 5 per cent. this year but this reduction is too small to give an appreciable result.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition because my experience has convinced me that, as long as the drunkard has the liquor in sight and thinks that he can have it by paying for it, he would not mind what price he pays for it, would rather sell every thing he had, rather than go without it. So total prohibition either immediately or within four years as suggested above would be the only means to improve the condition of the people. It is a practical measure because I am sure nothing is impossible to the Government of India when it is sincerely inclined to do it.

5. (*a*) Of course when I favour that prohibition I know that there would be some attempt to get liquor by illicit means but Government can prevent it by law and strict supervision for which Government will have to incur some costs in the beginning. But neither the inconvenience nor the costs would be too much for Government.

(*b*) Strict supervision on the border of the Indian States would prevent illegal importation. I am fully convinced that when the British Government itself goes in for total prohibition the Indian States and their subjects would stop this traffic within their territories also, if not from any higher motive, out of very shame for it.

(*c*) No Government need be afraid of any serious discontent if the liquor traffic is stopped, because even the worst drunkard wishes that the traffic should be stopped as he knows well that if the liquor is removed from his sight, he will soon be rid of the habit. It is because the temptation is too strong for him when he sees the liquor and thinks that he can have it by paying for it, that he yields.

(*d*) Government will have to incur some expenses on this head but when I think of the permanent good it will do to the people we need not shrink from such expenditure.

(*e*) This is also not very likely because now that the Sangamner liquor shop is closed for one year, there has been no increase in the sale of other drugs. A man is not likely to take to *ganja* or other drug simply because he does not get wines to drink.

6. My idea is that total prohibition will have a very good effect on the present generation and will be a boon to the next generation.

7. Prohibitive legislation will be necessary coupled with the fact that distillation will be stopped and importation also, either immediately or within four years as suggested by me.

8. If prohibition is to be applied, it must, I think, be applied to distilled as well as fermented liquors, because when distilled liquors are prohibited drunkards are likely to take to fermented liquors, such as toddy and shindi, though they may not take to drugs.

9. As I hold that total prohibition is feasible and desirable, I need not answer this question.

10. (*a*) If Government adopts the proposal of reducing the production and sale of liquor by 25 per cent. per year, then the rationing of shops would be necessary.

(*b*) Increase in the price of liquor is not likely to root out the evil. It will only make the lives of poor drunkards more miserable by making them spend a greater portion of their earnings. Because we cannot expect, from drunkards economy based on prudence.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops will have very little effect, because those who are addicted to this vice would not mind the incovenience of going a few paces further for a drink.

(*d*) This also will have very little effect because when they get a chance of drinking, they drink with vengence on such occasions.

(*e*) Reducing the strength of liquor will do some good, if the quantity to be rationed out to each shop is also reduced considerably.

(*f*) Will not have any tangible effect upon the sale of liquor.

(*g*) This will be necessary in case of total prohibition or reducing the quantity of liquor to be sold at each shop.

(*h*) This will only be useful in case of prohibition of licenses and not their regulation.

(*i*) When the sale of liquor is allowed all these limits of age and other prohibitions can very easily be defied; so they do not practicably help the cause at all.

(*j*) No good will come by encouraging temperance associations because the vice thrives inspite of those associations.

(*k*) This rule can be avoided with impunity without very little chance of detection and is not therefore likely to be of any use.

11. The principle of local option should be introduced. In places where there are no municipalities or taluka or district local boards, local option should be left to the majority of tax payers in that locality, rules being framed as to eligibility for such votes.

12. The municipalities and district or taluka local boards should not only be invested with the power of determining the number and location of shops but they must also have the option of saying that there should be no shops at all within the limits.

They should not be made responsible for raising any part of the revenue that would be sacrificed by the excercise of such powers.

13. The advisory committee have not been able to do much good because their recommendations were not carried out by Government. Unless Government is in sympathy with the wishes of the people in the matter of total prohibition no good can be done by these advisory committees or by any change in their constitution. Government must be prepared to lose their revenue on this head.

14. The statistics of America as given by Mr. Johnson and our own reports of the criminal department would show that drinking contributes to the increase in crime. It lessens the output of work because the man loses his vitality day by day and is thus not able to work hard.

15. I am not inclined to suggest any sources of income because some of the newspapers are complaining that the sources of income which were pointed out by the public for raising money for primary education were utilised by Government in raising revenue to make up the deficit in general revenues.

16. Raising taxes on opium and hemp would do some good.

17. Among the educated, opium is not generally given to children. It is among the illiterate and labouring classes particularly that opium is given that the child might not disturb the woman in her daily occupation. I cannot say what effect it has upon the death rate, but doctors say that children are likely to suffer from constipation and other diseases which might result in death.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. SANT replied to the President :—"Ten years ago I myself had approached the Collector of the district on behalf of the people of Sangamner with a request that if Government would close the liquor shop at once at Sangamner, people would be willing to bear any loss that they might sustain. At that time Government did not think of closing the liquor shop at Sangamner. Now perhaps the situation having been changed, people consider that they have already been taxed too much and they might not like the idea of going in for any fresh taxation even though there may be total prohibition.

"At present there is not a single liquor shop at Sangamner."

To Mr. Baker :—"I shall not reduce any expenditure that is now being made on education. I am in favour of both education and prohibition."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"I am not in favour of reducing the number of shops.

"So long as a liquor shop is there, so long as temptation is there, all efforts in the direction of prohibition will be of no avail.

"I have not the least faith in temperance associations.

"There is much decrease in the number of crimes. The number of petty thefts committed with a view to getting money for drink is reduced. I cannot give the exact number.

"I would like to have both education and prohibition. But if there are no sufficient funds for both and if only one is to be selected out of them, then I would go in for removing this evil of drink first."

To Dr. Patil :—"I would certainly prohibit opium also."

No. 54.

REPLIES OF THE MADYAPAN PRATI-BANDHAK MANDAL, SATARA.

1. The Mandal has been in existence for over 8 months. It has come into existence to offer a common platform to all the temperance workers of various shades of public opinion. The personnel of the Managing Committee of the Mandal consists of members who have wide experience in temperance matters as members of the municipality, the district and taluka local boards and the local advisory committee and who also possess a close touch with the masses. As an organized body of all the temperance workers in Satara the Mandal can, therefore, speak authoritatively on the subject.

2. (*a*) The Mandal is of opinion that the excise policy of Government, as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001—Exc. of 7th September 1905, being inconsistant with the traditions and the enlightened opinion of the country, and being based on a misconceived notion of individual liberty necessitating the 'lessaiz faire' policy, has in general failed to achieve its purpose. It does not take account of the strong religious and social anti-drink tendencies of the masses, and is not calculated to meet the exingencies of the situation.

(*b*) The actual results of the policy as it has been carried out into practice are far from satisfactory. The fiscal considerations have unfortunately often outweighed the basic principles laid down in that policy, and the declared safeguards have often been bartered away for an increased revenue. In the opinion of the Mandal it has not put any *effective* check on intemperance.

3. The policy requires radical alterations. The time has come when Government should declare itself in favour of total prohibition as a goal to be achieved within 5 years by defined stages. The announced policy should also include a programme to be worked out, drawn on lines indicated in the replies to the other questions.

4. The Mandal is strongly in favour of total prohibition for the following reasons :—

(*a*) Liquor is not at all a necessity, either as a food or as a beverage, in view of the climatic conditions of the country.

(*b*) It has been strongly indicted by all the leading religions in the country.

(*c*) It has been traditionally looked upon as a vice and a stigma on society.

(*d*) The majority of the population is free from the influence of intoxicants.

(*e*) The country as a whole does not abound in raw materials which cannot be turned to any better account than for distillery purposes.

(*f*) Even medically it has been found injurious and shortens life, as is seen from the fact that the insurance companies charge higher premium on the drunkards; and lastly

(*g*) the habit is of recent growth and can be soon eliminated if vigorous attempts are made.

The Mandal considers 'Prohibition' quite a practicable measure. The United States have made it an accomplished fact and will serve as a guide in the matter.

Total prohibition can be brought about most effectively only by means of legislation prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, and by making illicit dealers liable for heavy penalties. If this is not found to be immediately practicable the Mandal suggests the following alternative proposals :—

(1) Government should immediately undertake legislation to legalise the system of local option on the lines of the Scottish Local Option Law of 1921, altered to suit the local conditions of this country.

(2) Government should declare a time limit of 5 years within which to make the country dry, and should adjust the supply of liquor to give effect to this declaration.

(3) Prohibition should be introduced immediately into certain defined areas as an experiment; and, by extending the extent of such experimental areas, the whole province should be covered within 5 years. The Mandal further suggests that Satara having minimum consumption should be chosen first for such an experiment.

5. The objections noted in this question are stereotyped ones and are often publicly exploded. They can, however, briefly be met thus :—

(*a*) These sources are not available in all the parts of the Presidency but are confined to specified areas. They are not, moreover, worked primarily for distilling purposes and can be conveniently utilized for more fruitiful results. Strict administration of excise rules will not fail effectively to control the tendencies towards illicit distillation.

(*b*) The public opinion in Indian States is as decisive against the liquor trade as in British districts. The Chiefs of Indian States in general are sufficiently enlightened to endorse the policy of total prohibition, and, if there were to be some exceptions, the pressure of the public opinion and the example of British Government will bring them down to this

view. Some of them, as this Association learns, will be too glad to introduce total prohibition if it is accomplished in the surrounding British districts. The difficulty can also be avoided by prohibiting through private arrangements the location of liquor shops within 10 miles of the prohibited areas and by rationing the shops in such states. Many of the minor states, moreover, are included in the Abkari districts and are recipient of fixed subsidies which they can easily forego. The proximity of the Portuguese territory does not threaten to affect the situation, and vigorous administration of Abkari rules will prevent any possible danger from that part.

(*c*) The traditions and the general customs of the masses are against drink, and there is no fear of any serious discontent. On higher ground of public morality and public welfare, Government have often undertaken legislation of even more drastic character and they should not mind the microscopic discontent, if there is likely to be any. Europeans, Anglo-Indians, and the Parsees, if they so desire, may be temporarily exempted from prohibitory legislation.

(*d*) This objection is based on the misconceived notion that the general public feeling is exceedingly in favour of drink and that facilities for illicit distillation are eqully available in all parts of the Presidency. The Mandal is of opinion that the ordinary police force will be able effectively to detect crimes against the Abkari law just in the same way as offences against other laws are detected. In certain parts the Forest staff should be made available for detecting crimes in connection with mhowra flowers.

(*e*) This again is due to a misconceived notion. There is no likelihood of such a probability, especially if other drugs are treated on equal footing with liquor.

6. The Mandal certainly appreciates the force of this argument. But further thinks that prohibition can reap its fruit even in this very generation as has been the experience in the United States.

7. The Mandal thinks that there cannot be any better substitute to prohibitive legislation for attaining complete cessation of the consumption of alcoholic liquor. But if it is found to be immediately impracticable the alternatives suggested in the reply to questions nos. 4 and 13 should be immediately adopted. The simultaneous carrying out of all the remedies proposed in question no. 10 is also recommended as a palliative.

8. This Mandal does think that the principle of prohibition should be made equally applicable to all kinds of liquors distilled or fermented. As fermented toddy or shindi contains more than ½ or 1 per cent. of alcohol, and would come under the definition of liquor as given in the prohibition legislation prevalent in the United States, the Mandal would like to have prohibition made applicable to them too. But it is prepared to allow temporary concessions in the case of those drinks in districts where they are very common, *e. g.*, in Thana or Surat.

9. In view of the fact that the Mandal thinks total prohibition quite practicable it does not deem it necessary to suggest more palliatives than the alternative schemes already proposed. The Mandal however will be prepared to consent to the granting of licenses for selling foreign liquors for the time being, provided the licensees are prohibited from selling them to Indians; medical practioners also should be reserved the liberty of vending measured quantities of liquor by way of prescriptions.

10. The Mandal treats these remedies as mere palliatives. In case all other suggestions made by the Mandal do not find favour with the committee the Mandal makes the following suggestions about these :—

(*a*) The rationing should be based upon the average consumption for the previous five years reduced by one-tenth of that quantity every year.

(*b*) The prices should be gradually made prohibitive. The surcharge system prevalent in Bengal should also be adopted.

(*c*), (*f*) and (*h*) These matters should be entirely entrusted to the controlling committees which should be constituted on lines suggested in reply to question no. 13.

(*d*) The shops should be closed on all the public—especially Hindu and Mahomedan—holidays, market days and election days. The hours of sale should be from 6 a. m. to 3 p.m.

(*e*) Only 40° u. p. and 60° u. p. liquor should be made available. All other strong liquors should be absolutely prohibited.

(*g*) Cheap and raw foreign liquor, especially the inodorous Japan spirits which are growing popular in the market in preference to country liquor, should be absolutely prohibited. Temporary exemptions for other foreign liquors should be granted, if limited to the use of the exempted communities and to medical purposes only.

(*i*) The sale of liquor to any man under 21 years of age and to any woman whatever should be absolutely prohibited.

(*j*) The temperance associations should be encouraged in all possible ways. Besides granting them subsidies, responsible officials of such associations should be authorised to pay surprise visits to liquor shops, inspect accounts and detect any breach of the excise rules. They should also be authorised to institute proceedings for rowdyism. All the statistical and other informa-

tion regarding excise matters, especially that relating to the sale and consumption of liquor, should be made available to them and excise officers should be directed to treat them as sympathetic helpers and not as suspects. In this particular matter the Mandal has the most bitter experience.

(*k*) Removal of liquor from shops should be absolutely prohibited. Persons under 21 should not be allowed on the shop premises.

The Mandal further suggest that not more than one bottle should be allowed to one man in any one day, though he might be allowed to take that quantity in several instalments.

11. The introduction of the system of local option is the second best means of reaching the goal. The Mandal is of opinion that a legislation should be undertaken by which if 60 per cent. of the adult population voting in the locality adopt a no-license resolution the shop in that locality should be closed immediately. Provisions should also be made for legalizing limited-license-resolution on the model of those provided in the Bill of Local Option introduced last year in the Madras Council.

12. The Mandal will have no objection to investing local bodies with such powers if controlling bodies such as those proposed in the next reply are found to be impracticable, but the Mandal begs to point out that specialised controlling bodies are obviously preferable in excise matters to local bodies. It does not favour the proposal of making such bodies responsible for making good the deficit in revenue caused by the exercise of such powers.

13. The existing committees have failed to serve the purpose for which they were originally constituted. They have all along been official-ridden bodies making mere recommendations which are more often rejected than accepted. The Mandal, therefore, suggest that:

(1) The present advisory committees should be replaced by controlling committees with power (*a*) to grant, revoke and control licenses, (*b*) to regulate the location, days and hours of sale and the number of liquor shops and (*c*) to act as authority in all excise matters in the place of the district executive officers.

(2) The number of committees should be so increased as to secure a committee for every village having one or more liquor shops in the locality.

(3) Each committee should consist of 7 members 2 of whom should be elected by the district or taluka local boards under whose jurisdiction the shop might be located, 2 by the municipality or the village panchayat, if there be any (if there be neither, these members should be elected directly by the voters of the Provincial Legislative Council in the locality) and 2 should be nominated by Government. The committee should have power to elect its own President and to co-opt one more member having close knowledge of the subject.

14. The evil of drink certainly contributes to an increase in crime, cuts at the root of efficiency and lessens the output of work.

15. The Mandal as it is constituted finds it very difficult to answer this question which can be properly replied only by a financier or a politician of wide range of study and broad outlook. The Mandal, therefore, refrains from making any definite suggestions in the matter; but the Mandal thinks that a part of the loss of revenue can be counterbalanced by still more retrenchment in the top-heavy administration and the rest should be made up by levying surcharges on income over Rs. 10,000, death duties and entertainment duties. The Mandal is of opinion that the rich mill-owners who will be immediately benefitted by prohibition should be made to contribute a proportionate share of the loss of revenue.

16. The Mandal has no particular remarks to offer, except that these drugs should be treated on the same footing with liquor.

17. The custom is generally prevalent among the ignorant classes of the Presidency. It is certainly injurious to the health of children, but the results are not perceptible and there is no appreciable effect on the death-rate among children.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Rao Bahadur R. R. KALE, President, Madyapan Prati-Bandhak Mandal, Satara, replied to the President:—"The Mandal has been in existence for over 8 months. It has about 50 members. Members of all communities are included.

"With the help of an officer like Mr. Arthur, who was the head of the Abkari Department, and also of the Collector we were able to reduce the number of shops in various localities in the district. With the help of an American Missionary, Mr. Lee, we were using the magic lantern also.

"So far up to now I have been working for the reduction of this evil of drink. My activities are also concerned with primary education.

"As regards the willingness of the people to bear the additional burden of new taxes, I have said in my written replies that in the first place we must effect economy and then find out additional money. Retrenchment in higher serivces will give us more money. There is much room for retrenchment and there will be no necessity even for further taxation.

"I will go in for death duties, if the question about undivided Hindu families is satisfactorily solved.

"I advocate court fees being charged on the original side of the High Court.

"I am proposing to introduce legislation in connection with Devasthans to be undertaken by Government, and that a certain portion of the income from it might be utilized for primary education and also to replace the money that Government will lose on account of prohibition.

"The Mandal is strongly in favour of prohibition within five years.

"The Bhils, the Kolis, the Dharalas and the Waghras, who consider drinking as their birth-right, are confined to particular parts. They are not scattered all over the Presidency and they may temporarily be exempted from prohibitory legislation.

"Seventy per cent. of the people are non-drinking. Temperance workers should be permitted to visit liquor shops. Responsible officers, like secretaries of associations, and honorary visitors should be allowed to go into liquor shops to investigate breaches of law. On good many occasions they are not allowed to enter liquor shops; that ought to be stopped.

"I am in favour of the introduction of the system of local option, as the next best means reaching the goal. I would prefer adult vote.

"The Mandal begs to point out that specialized controlling bodies are obviously preferable in excise matters to local bodies, as the latter cannot be trusted to deal with this question; some times members themselves are drunkards. I think that there must be other members provided for this work to guide and influence them.

"I would like to have Advisory Committees more representative."

To Mr. Baker.—"Retrenchment must be supplemented by additional taxation.

"Facilities for drinking increase the evil.

"Reducing the number of shops is not of very much use.

"In Karad Taluka there were 8 shops in 1916; 2 have since been stopped, which I do not consider to be an appreciable decrease.

"A drunkard falls a victim to the temptation of drink, when it is held forth before him."

"Volunteers like myself have never been refused admission in liquor shops. In fact, I must say I have been visiting shops of liquor in connection with offences."

To Mr. Jadhav.—"Prohibition should be applied to Satara first.

"I consider that both primary education and prohibition are necessary and important.

To Rao Saheb Desai.—"I have no tangible results to show the success of temperance work. Education in a way would certainly conduce to put a stop to liquor."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol.—"Satara is almost a dry district."

To Mr. Mehta.—"I would prefer the 'non' license system.

"Rationing should be based upon the average consumption for the previous five years reduced by one-tenth of that quantity every year."

No. 55.

## Replies of Lieutenant-Colonel D. D. KHAMBHATTA, K.B., V.D., President, Poona Suburban Municipality.

1. I am an oldundergraduate of the Bombay University (F. E. A. 1874); have no profession at present. I am a pensioner. I have served for 30 years in the Indian Auxiliary Forces. I have travelled a good deal, seen good deal of the world, have been nearly over the whole of India, been through whole of Afghanistan, Ceylon, visited Europe twice, once when deputed by the Government of India to attend His Majesty's Coronation in 1911, been to the United States of America; visited Gibraltar, Malta, Cairo, etc. I have taken great interest in temperance movements and have most closely watched the effects of drink on the poor wherever I have met them.

2. As regards the Excise policy of Government laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Excise of 7th September 1905, an extract from which is given in the list of questions, I do not agree that Government should not interfere with what they call the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation and that it is necessary to make due provision for the need of such persons. I think it is the duty of a parental Government to look after the well-being and moral and material welfare of their children, as the subjects certainly are, and to save them from acquiring vicious habits; for it cannot be contended that drink is not a vice. Moreover, how can one draw the line at moderation? A glass would be moderation for one man to a toper half a quart would not exceed moderation. What have Government done in the case of opium? That was, I suppose, strong outside pressure and that to save a foreign nation from degradation. Why not their own (Indian) nation in case of drink? Barring this preamble, their settled policy for the time being is fairly sound, but I am constrained to say it is a dead letter. It is maintained in breach rather than in the observance. The number of liquor shops is not restricted; their location is not subject to strict examination: public opinion is not respected: local option is another expression for local officials' opinion: the recommendations of the local Advisory Committees count for nothing. Government are anxious and rightly so that the liquor for sale should be of good quality. The latter is a very elastic term; who has ever supervised that this is ensured? Petty officials?

3. I think Government ought to be disabused of the idea that it is outside their duty to interfere with those who use alcohol in moderation. It is as much within their province to stop gambling, thieving, cheating, perjury, sexual offences, *et hoc genus omnes*, as to put a stop to alcohol inebriation. But as I have said below, it is not possible to do away with the drink evil at a stroke; full effect should be given to the Government policy as therein adumbrated by taking fully into confidence the Advisory Committees and following their advice and adopting some of the means suggested for controlling consumption as proposed by me in paragraph 13 below.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition, but it is not practicable at present. The evil that has existed for ages cannot be eradicated in a day; it must take time, but that is no reason why steps should not be taken towards that end to gradually wean the people from drink.

5. (*a*) I do not think there is such facility for obtaining liquor by illicit means; this bugbear of illicit distillation is always paraded directly check on consumption of liquor is proposed. (1) Toddy from palm trees is so readily obtainable that it will not be worth any one's while to manufacture liquor by distillation. (2) Jaggery is too valuable an article to be converted into liquor because, in the first place, its price almost approximates that of sugar, local or imported, and secondly, an elaborate and costly machinery is required for making sugar, and the liquor or rum is only a bye product of the same. Mere liquor cannot be produced without going in for sugar, and the class of people who according to some people's ideas when deprived of ordinary liquor are thrown on their resources are too poor to afford the luxury of a sugar manufacturing factory, wherefrom to get their supply of rum or liquor. (3) Kaju is a very expensive article and it is not so easy or cheap as to permit of liquor being distilled therefrom. What is distilled in Goa is used chiefly for medical purposes.

(*b*) This is another bugbear and a stock argument against prohibition (I use prohibition in its restricted sense). The Portuguese territory touches only a fringe of the Presidency and there is nothing to prevent and inter-territorial arrangement being arrived at between the Indian and Indian Portuguese Government. Moreover, the fact must be remembered that the latter's customs duties are very heavy and their regulations very strict to allow of any large quantities of liquor passing into British India. As regards the proximity of Indian states, there is nothing easier than to enter into agreements with them and I am sure they are perhaps more anxious than we are to reduce, if not abolish, intemperance.

(*c*) As I have said it is at present impossible to introduce total prohibition, and restricted sale of liquor will not interfere with the customs and habits of certain classes of people. It is an extraordinary argument to say that this will cause discontent; conversely, have enormous unrestricted consumption of liquor and you will make people happy and contented!! On the contrary, as I will show later on, the temporary stoppage of sale of liquor from April to

December 1921 was the means of making the families of the habitual drinkers happy and prosperous. Their wives, who used a single *sari* and *choli* from year's end to year' s end, bedecked themselves in new clothes during the above period, as the (men) heads of the families had no use for the money they earned, and which in other circumstances used to go into the liquor sellers' pockets.

(*d*) In this question it is taken for granted that in the event of prohibition being introduced "there will be illicit distillation everywhere." I cannot understand what "everywhere" means—every house ? every street ? every village ? The fact is lost sight of that it is the poorest classes—labourers, artizans, menials, domestic servants, mill hands and such like—who go in for drink, and surely it is not argued that every one of these thousands and lacs will have illicit distillation installed in his house.

What I have said above is sufficient answer as regards the necessity of maintaining a large preventive establishment. This threat is always hurled against prohibition !

As regards "the increased temptation to levy illegal exactions on the part of the establishment," it must be a rotten organization which at the start would leave men open to temptations.

(*e*) There is no possibility, much less probability, of people taking to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs, for it is a well known fact that a liquor drinker will never take to opium or an opium eater to liquor, *bhang*, *ganja*, etc. A man indulging in *ganja* may go in for a bout of liquor, but even then there are easier checks for these. The short prohibition we had in Poona, recklessly spoiled by boisterous picketing, only too conclusively proved this. Toddy or palm juice is an exception to the above. A liquor drinker would be satisfied if he got a good toddy drink and I will show later on what a healthy, wholesome drink toddy is, if served within a few hours of its being drawn and unadulterated.

Statistics compiled in my Court show that the average of cases and accused was as follows :—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| From January to March | .. .. | 22-28 |
| For 9 months from April to December 1921 | .. .. | 4·2-4·6 |
| From January to February 1922 | .. .. | 5-6 (rising). |

6. There is no doubt, as one' s experience of the world ought to tell him, that prohibition, if not effective in the present generation will have a large influence on the next. Look at the nations, Arabs and Afghans for instance, in whose country liquor is prohibited and not even known, and look at the other picture of Mahar, Mangs and other low class so called untouchables, even degenerate Maharathas and others, who indulge in excessive drink and the issues of such drunken sots. You cannot experience or see them sitting in an arm chair. Look at the superior classes of Hindus and Mahomedans who do not indulge in drink, their physical capacity and their mental calibre. In the former case we have children of drunken sots, who spend their petty earnings in liquor, starving themselves and their families, wives and children, leave alone their moral ruin, since they can get liquor to drink *ad libitum* to the end of their earnings, if not from borrowed money. These things are known to men who move about the lower world. One illustration will suffice to show how abstention builds the physical body. There are some 2,000 inmates of the Yeravda Jail. (I see them periodically during my official visit). In the Jail they get no liquor of course. You cannot come across a better body of men physically than these, barring women and others suffering from chronic diseases. Compare these with the drunkards of the same class outside the Jail.

7. I have already said that the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor cannot be achieved at present. The monstrous evil which has existed for generations cannot be done away with in a day. It must be done gradually, the aim being kept in view to complete prohibition in course of time. In addition to restricted prohibitive legislation, the temperance societies and others connected with temperance movements should be allowed to practise peaceful persuasion. There are, I am speaking of Poona, many who would undertake this work, and at other stations also, if they are not unnecessarily hampered and molested by the Police through mistaken zeal. Thus, I am convinced, if Government not keeping their eye only on increase of revenue, co-operate with these self-sacrificing people, whose one object is to save their fellow creatures from moral and physical ruin, half the battle will be won, and we will be on the high way to the goal.

8. No. I would not apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors distilled or fermented. Toddy or shindi, tapped from palmyra palm, phoenix sylvestris (shindi), cocoanut trees, and even caryota urens (*mahad*), is an excellent healthy diuretic, mildly laxative drink, and should be encouraged by taxing it lightly. Men who drink toddy do not much care for alcoholic liquor. Fresh toddy from certain date trees (phoenix sylvestris) is as refreshing as, if not better than, champagne. Only when it is kept for more than 12 hours and in unclean vessels, it gets fermented. The great thing is not to keep it in unclean vessels, that is, those which held previous day's toddy. They must be washed. Again on no account the juice should be adulterated as is invariably done by the dealers with water not unoften taken from nullas. Usually, a helpless cry is raised by the officials concerned, who in this matter simply echo the cry of their subordinates, "how can we check this ?" Of course it can be checked by exercising efficient supervision over it, and means should be devised for it. The subordinates, menials, to

whom the supervision is entrusted collude with the dealers, sometimes a glass or two of toddy is sufficient to keep their mouths shut. Any breach of the rules should be severely punished by fines or deprivation of the dealer' s license, and the peccant official severely dealt with. It is when rules are lax or not carried out that an institution or a system gets a bad name, and is promptly pronounced unworkable. I might add that even unadulterated fermented toddy is less injurious to health than alcoholic liquor and is very mildly intoxicant if taken in excess.

9. I have given my opinion above as regards the absolute prohibition of country liquor, but in respect of foreign liquor I have a word to say. Poisonous foreign liquors are being freely imported—of course they pay custom duties, etc., which the importers get out of the unfortunate consumers. The importation of these liquors should be absolutely prohibited. This prohibition should not apply to well known brands of brandy and whisky of British manufacture. These could be classified, and ordinarily they are not within the reach of men of the classes who go in for country liquor. Then again, no Europe or British liquor shops should be allowed in cities and town. Their existence should be confined to cantonments, as it would be an unnecessary temptation to people in the city who ordinarily are non-drinkers. Indian brewed beer which contains a small percentage of alcohol, about 6 to 7 per cent., for a time found favour with the usual liquor drinkers ; it is certainly wholesome and less injurious, but it is more expensive.

10. I shall deal with the means suggested, *seriatim* :—

(*a*) Rationing of shops. I entirely agree.

(*b*) Increasing the price of liquor. I agree.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops. This is very necessary, as the more shops we have the larger the number of drinkers. If they are at a distance, a man will think twice before going that distance, but the temptation is greater when a man finds a shop handy on his way to or from his work, or near his quarters.

(*d*) Reducing days and hours of sale. I have always advocated this ; but have not altogether succeeded. No reasons have, though I have frequently challenged the authorities, been shown to keep liquor shops open in the middle of the day. If so, the trite excuse is often trotted forward, " the (poor !) man wants a little drink to cheer him up at the end of the day's work ; " why keep the shops open at noon, when alcoholic drink has a most pernicious effect on the drinker ? The shops should not be opened before 4 p. m. and should be religiously closed at 7-30 p. m.

The shops should be closed on Sundays and on the holidays of all communities, sectional and general, as the temptation to drink is always great on holidays (" san "), when they have no work.

(*e*) Reducing the strength of liquor. Yes, it must be made as innocuous as possible. Sixty degrees under proof should be the strength. When they get used to it the drinkers will not ask for liquor of higher strength. The smell is enough for them.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops. Next to regulating days and hours of sale, this is of great importance. The shops must never be allowed in the midst of Brahmins, Vanis and other non-drinking population. Moreover, they must not be situated in a secluded place ; this brings us to the question of local option which I shall deal with in its proper place.

(*g*) Restricting or prohibiting the importation and sale of foreign liquor. I have given my reasons for and against in paragraph 9 above.

(*h*) Regulating and, where necessary, prohibiting certain kinds of licences. I am in favour of such a ruling, and it must be rigidly enforced ; no lukewarm measures would do any good.

(*i*) Prescribing age limit for customers of liquor. In my opinion no one under the age of 20 years should be allowed to drink. Women and girls *should not under any circumstances* be served with liquor.

(*j*) Encouraging temperance work by subsidising temperance associations or by other means. If unnecessary and annoying interference by the police and others is removed, perhaps it may not be necessary to subsidise temperance associations, as, as I have stated above, many self-sacrificing men who have the well being of their unfortunate brethren (drinkers and their families) at heart would come forward to work on the right lines in the cause of temperance and to save these unfortunate human beings from physical and moral ruin, without any remuneration whatever. If a man has weaned one human being of the type described, he has done incalculable good not only to himself and to his family and his future progeny, but to humanity at large. For, it is a fact well known that the taint of drunkenness goes down to the next generation.

(*k*) Restricting or prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops. The shops should be all " on " shops, *i. e.*, liquor should be drunk on the premises ; the quantity should not exceed 2 drams. Although I say 2 drams, the man in the shop will take care not to give him the full measure. Thus the shopkeeper makes money both ways and the Excise Department their revenue at the cost of the health and morals of the poor wretch.

Orthodox Parsees require country liquor for some religious ceremonies. It is a custom; nothing is laid down against the use of any foreign wine or liquor. Moreover, it is required in very small quantities. For this purpose and for liquor required in other communities for religious ceremonies, etc., if any, passes may be issued by the Collector or Assistant Collector of Excise for a bottle or two.

I think I have said enough in favour of constructive proposals if the authorities will take it in good part and make up their mind to sacrifice a part, if not the whole, of the revenue derived from the promotion of the vice.

11. If I do not mistake local option is all over the world, but here in India, more particularly in Poona, local option has no voice. I am certainly in favour of it. If the residents of a particular locality do not want a liquor shop in their midst, one should not certainly be allowed. Why should respectable people and their families suffer from the annoyance of drunkards, when the authorities according to their own sweet will thrust a liquor shop down their throats. If care is taken in the first place to select localities, there will not be much trouble nor any occasion for exercising local option. If, however, a shop is forced on the locality, and generally this is done at the desire of the shopkeeper who sometimes pleads for a nice house which does for his habitation also, then the voice of the neighbour should be respected and the shop removed therefrom. Who does not know that a man in his cups is boisterous, rowdy and indulges in filthy indecent language, and who would like his female relatives to be unwilling listeners to such filth ?

12. I would certainly favour the suggestion of investing local bodies, municipalities, district and taluka local boards with the power of determining the number and location of the shops in their respective areas; for what are these bodies but the representatives of and elected by the people. It would be asking them too much as suggested in the question to hold them responsible for raising any part of the revenues that would be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers in their area. A rather heavy price to pay for doing their duties as citizens and to work in the cause of humanity ! A vice is allowed to reach unusual proportions and you ask "if we mitigate the nuisance, what price are the people going to pay for it ?" If any comparison is made with the excise revenue derived from this source at present with that, say, 5 or 7 years ago, I am sure, it will be found that it has more than doubled itself. Does it not logically follow that larger revenue means very much increased consumption of liquor and therefore greater amount of drunkenness. Who is responsible for this ? Surely, not the general public. It is not suggested that the shopkeepers have suffered. Certainly not, as every year they add on to their bids, and the proof of their having enriched themselves can be seen, at all events in Poona, where those who were poor 10 or 12 years ago have built houses and own property worth thousands of rupees in the Poona Cantonment alone.

13. The existing Advisory Committees are all right, but they are impotent; they have made recommendations but the authorities flout them. The present Advisory Committee, for instance at Poona, has on it representatives from the 2 municipalities and the cantonment committee and the District Superintendent of Police, and whatever recommendations they make are based on experience and well considered in all cases. For the removal of a shop even the District Superintendent of Police agreed, but their recommendations as regards the removal and reduction of shops were set at naught. It is no use having such committees unless their voice is respected, for they are in a far better position to judge than one or two responsible officials, and I personally do not blame the latter for following the old traditions; they are expected to make money for Government. But in any case, the considered recommendations of the Advisory Committees should see the light of the day and the high authority concerned should know that the committees justify their existence.

14. As regards the question if the evil of drink contributes to an increase in crime and if it has any effect on the output of work, my reply is an emphatic affirmative. I speak from experience. I am First Class Special Cantonment Magistrate and for Civil Lines, and a number of cases come before me of mischief done while in an inebriate state or of persons found dead drunk lying unconscious on the road, workmen employed in factories and presses and domestic servants, and also of men who in that state have committed theft or caused injuries to others. I will give an instance of a printing press. From April to December 1921, the proprietor of the press found his men very regular, hardly was there a case of absenteeism through drunkenness, but since December the men have got back to their old ways before April, irregular in attendance owing to drunkenness, not attending for days after getting their pay on the 1st of the month, with the result that the work generally suffered. If statistics were taken the same result would be found everywhere.

15. As I have said above, I would advocate partial and gradual prohibition, so that means might be devised, meanwhile, to recoup this inflated revenue. Has anyone yet attempted to find out why and from what period the expenditure has during the last few years increased ? Is it not a fact that new posts were created on handsome salaries before the introduction of the Reformed Scheme ? Is it not a fact that large additions were made to the already more than handsome salaries enjoyed by certain officials and Heads of Departments ? Has anyone worked

out the result of travelling allowances of certain classes of officials lately increased—a 50 per cent. increase ? Where was the necessity of doubling the maximum pay of a certain class of officials ? and the corresponding increase in the travelling allowance, when they had been getting the old rates for years ? The argument is generally advanced " we must give better pay for a better class of men. " Surely it is not argued that these men have developed as they advanced in age better brains and working capacity ? Take the instance of travelling allowance. An official gets now 12 annas a mile instead of 8 annas a mile which he used to get before 1917-18. He has to go to a place on inspection or other duty, say a distance of 144 miles forwards and backwards ; he does this in his own motor car, which officials generally have, or supposing he goes by some company's motor car taking two seats for forward and return journey for Rs. 15 each. Deducting Rs. 30 from the mileage allowance of Rs. 108, leaves him a handsome present of Rs. 78, each time which the Government rules make to him in addition to his handsome salary. If he stays for a day, he does not suffer, he gets detention allowance of Rs. 6 to Rs. 7, or perhaps more, a day. The number of such inspections are restricted, but why should not the official be restricted to actual out of pocket expenses ? Then there are so many fifth wheels in Government coaches. Take for instance the Chief Engineer in Sind, where there are only two Superintending Engineers. The former has to take his orders from the Secretary to Government in the Public Works Department. Cannot the Superintending Engineers correspond direct with Government ? I am not sure if the post was recently created, but even if it was not, is there any justification for this fifth wheel ? Take another fifth wheel, the Sanitary Engineer. Has the creation of his office averted the dismal failure of the Poona Drainage Scheme costing lacs of rupees, under the burden of which the Poona City Municipality is still groaning and which has necessitated the inauguration of another brand new scheme which a far seeing Governor like His Excellency, Sir George Lloyd, is trying to establish, involving an outlay of some 40 lacs. Take another extra wheel—the Sanitary Commissioner—now called the Director of Public Health, and a number of his assistants, Deputy Sanitary Commissioners, called Assistant Directors of Public Health, offices of recent growth. Why could not the offices be under the Surgeon General—being a branch of his work ? So far as I know the chief business at all events of one Deputy Sanitary Commissioner was to arrange for catching rats, while their general and chief work is supervision over vaccination, and to compile and multiply statistics which no one outside the official circle, except perhaps a newspaper, cares to review, and their figures are all practically borrowed from municipalities and local and taluka boards. Then again look at the houses that are being built and bungalows acquired for officials at double the cost of pre-war time. How have they managed hitherto ? If at all necessary to the officials, why not wait for a favourable opportunity when prices go down, and thus not add to or cause a deficit in the Budget. Instances can be multiplied but I would by so doing be intruding on official preserves. I have mentioned an instance or two to show why the pruning scissors should be applied, and why all Departments from an impartial standpoint thoroughly overhauled and reorganized, and money will be found for the deficit which partial prohibition will cause. The same old arguments were advanced when opium revenue was to be abolished years ago. We have not become bankrupts since.

The Advisory Committee have asked for information on certain points connected with the prohibition of alcoholic liquor and have given figures showing 13 crores as the expenditure of which net revenue from Excise is put down at 3 to 4 crores. Nothing is mentioned as to show much of this is from country liquor, the subject in question. Details of the 13 crores expenditure to balance the revenue might have been usefully given in detail for information, as it is scarcely fair to ask a man, " look here I am going to spend 13 crores and if I do not get the 3 to 4 crores from Excise, I will not be able to make both ends meet. " You will find in the disbursement side a number of items that might well stand over and others that have gradually swollen cut down.

16. As regards opium, under the present regulations a man, if so inclined, can get as much opium as he wants by sending to the vendor for it in different peoples' names. As medical men can get their necessary requirements and as their names are registered, it would restrict the consumption of opium if opium eaters are registered, and they only are allowed the prescribed quantity of the drug. Hemp, I think, should be absolutely prohibited. It does no good in any shape or form. *Ganja* has been lately interdicted in Sind.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is particularly prevalent amongst labouring classes where the parents generally have both to go out for work. The children of the poor are victims of this drug. It is a contributory and not the direct cause of death amongst the children. When the poor child does not get food, and milk is its only food, a small pill is given to keep it quiet and lull it to sleep. Its vitality having already been lowered by hunger, the poison acts on the system and brings about death. Numbers die in this manner, but the diagnosis is assimilated to prevailing disorders. Who goes to perform *post mortem* examination on these tiny poors and ascertain the cause ? Here, too, the drink evil plays a prominent part. In many families of the labouring classes, both the father and mother drink. Where is the money left to buy the poor mite milk ? This drink devil is like an octopus which extends its tentacles in all directions, which are apparent to many, but those who do not want to see cannot see them. There have been many instances brought to my notice, but I shall close this subject with giving one which came directly under my observation. My servant was a drunkard—all his pay went to

the liquor shop—he got advances from me but these did not suffice. He used also to ill-treat his wife. During the short prohibition time from April to middle December 1921 he was not allowed near the liquor shops, with the result that he did not know what to do with his money and gave it to his wife, who poor woman provided herself with new clothes in place of the rags she was wearing, washing them every day, and came and fell on my feet saying "thanks be to Sarkar, the liquor shops closed, and I have got new *sari*, *choli*, etc."

I trust my remarks about what I consider unnecessary and superfluous establishments and charges will not be considered impertinent. I am challenged to show how the partial loss of revenue due to prohibition could be met and I have attempted to indicate some of the directions.

*Further points for consideration.*

1. Issue of rum to British troops which continued for years has now been stopped for nearly ten years. Any one who wants a drink can get beer only from the regimental canteen on payment.

2. It is a fact worthy of notice that the consumption of country liquor had gone down in 1921-22, when there was picketing for about 9 months, from 1,23,002 gallons in the preceding years to 51,022. During that period we never heard of any such cases of illicit distillation. Of course there was an increase in the consumption of inferior foreign liquors but there was a similar increase in the years before, which is no test.

*Panchgani and Mahableshwar.*

3. Liquor shops closed.

No illicit distillation reported.

There is a large proportion of labouring classes there; they do not seem to have suffered, or wanted something to "cheer" them up at the end of the day.

4. The question of restricted prohibition of country liquor must be entirely divorced from finance, *vide* Government Resolution, Revenue Department, no. 6092, dated 27th October 1875, and again in 1879. Also see one of 1838.

5. I think we must narrow down our recommendations to restricted prohibition of country liquor to be finally prohibited in 8 years time by means I have suggested, and total prohibition of importation of inferior poisonous brands of foreign liquor.

There should be no prohibition of recognized brands of spirits, brandy, whisky, beer, etc., and wines whose prohibitive prices will never come within reach of the classes who take country liquor and whom we want to wean from this pernicious habit. Total prohibition of their import is impracticable and can never be effected and there would be no object in doing so.

6. Number of country liquor shops in the Cantonment and City.

| | | Census (1922). |
|---|---|---|
| *Cantonment, Poona.* | | |
| Gootta Street | 40–60* | 27,148+5,519 troops, etc., =32,667. |
| Boottee Street | 40–60 | |
| Main Street, | 40–60 | |
| Mody Khana | 40–60 | |
| Wanowri | 40–60 | |
| Sholapur Bazar | –60 | |
| Ghorpuri | 40–60 | |
| *Cantonment, Kirkee* | 40–60 | 830,5+10047 troops, etc., =18,352. |
| *City, Poona.* | | |
| Nana Peth. | 40–60 | 1,33,285, |
| Mangalwar Peth. | 40–60 | |
| Raviwar Peth. | 40–60 | |
| Khadak. | 40–60 | |
| Mithganj. | –60 | |
| Narayen Peth. | –60 | |
| *Suburban.* | | |
| *Nil.* | | 14,233. |

7. There were about 15,566 troops† and followers† in Poona and Kirkee at the time of the Census in February last, who do not go in for liquor. We have had no instances; discipline keeps them away. While one shop is allotted to 8,305 civil population at Kirkee, there are 7 shops for about 27,148 civil population in the cantonment; and 6 shops for about 1,33,285 city population, and *none for* 14,233 of the suburban area.

* Strength of liquor, meaning so much under London proof.

† Since considerably reduced owing to disbandments of two regiments.

8. 1. The shop keepers draw liquor at Rs. 8 per gallon* of 40 U. P. and Rs. 5-8-0 per gallon of 60 U. P.

2. Mix 40 with 60 and sell at a profit.

3. 60 is sold at Rs. 2-8-0 to 2-4-0 per bottle.

40 is sold at Rs. 1-8-0 to 1-4-0 per bottle.

In other words, they pay for 40 Rs. 8 per gallon and make from Rs. 13-8-0 to Rs. 15 per gallon and for 60 Rs. 5-8-0 per gallon and make from Rs. 7-8-0 to Rs. 9 per gallon, not taking into account short measure and adulteration, if any.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Lieutenant-Colonel KHAMBATTA, replied to the President:—"I am President of the Poona Suburban Municipality.

"Servants and labouring classes are addicted to drinking. Some are born drunkards.

"I am in favour of total prohibition. But it is not practicable at present. I would resort to all means suggested in question no. 10. They will have a good effect on the whole question of drink.

"Illicit distillation is not at all possible in the district owing to the absence of mhowra flowers.

"During picketing there was an increase in the consumption of foreign liquor. (Here the witness handed over a statement† to the President in support of his statement.)

"I am entirely against the use of inferior foreign liquors. Foreign liquors of best quality must remain as at present. I would not prohibit foreign liquors of a superior class such as wine or beer. Lower classes do not go in for a superior class of liquor, as their prices are not within their reach. Other inferior liquors are absolutely poisonous and bad.

"I would not put a ban on toddy and shindi. Toddy is a wholesome drink.

"I would prefer the 'on' shop system and would fix the quantity at 2 drams in the case of each individual.

"Local option in Poona has no voice. I am certainly in favour of it.

"Liquor shops should be kept open from 4-30 p.m. to 7-30 p.m. according to the season.

"Existing advisory committees are all right, but they are impotent. It is no use having such committees unless their voice is respected. They are in a far better position to judge than one or two responsible officials."

To Mr. Baker:—"I am in favour of total prohibition within 8 or 10 years, either by reducing the hours of sale or by reducing the number of shops.

"Illicit distillation is a big bogey.

"I have had much talk about prohibition with the Chiefs of Indian States. It is very easy to enter into agreements with them and I am sure they are perhaps more anxious than we are to reduce, if not abolish, intemperance.

"There are some Parsis who do not drink at all.

"I would not prohibit beer."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"Prices of foreign liquors are already a good deal raised. Foreign liquors are beyond the reach of the people who have now taken to drink."

To Dr. Patil:—"Co-operation of Government is absolutely necessary. Mere private efforts will never be successful.

"Government do not provide liquor to prisoners who are in the habit of taking it. This does not tell on their health which, on the contrary, improves and they gain in weight.

"Unadulterated and unfermented toddy will wean people from the evil of drink.

"Liquor shops should also be closed on pay days.

"Opium must also be prohibited."

---

* Gallon = 6 bottles: 8 drams in a bottle.

† Printed below.

*Statement produced by Lieutenant-Colonel Khambatta, showing consumption of foreign liquors, etc., from 1904-1905 to 1920-1921 in the Poona District.*

| Year. | Fermented liquors. | Wines. | Liqueurs. | Spirits (potable). | Spirit of wine and other non-potable spirits. | Number of special licenses for retail sales, etc., during the year in question. | | | | | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Number of wholesale licenses. | Hotels. | Ordinary Refreshment Rooms. | Railway Refreshment Rooms. | Travellers Bungalow. | Tempy. R. Stalls. | |
| | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | | | | | | | |
| 1904-05 .. | 10,668 | 2,582 | 270 | 22,412 | 444 | 26 | 13 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 39 | |
| 1905-06 .. | 9,283 | 3,602 | 422 | 20,560 | 774 | 23 | 11 | 1 | 9* | 1 | 27 | *1 Dining Car license. |
| 1906-07 .. | 21,088 | 3,371 | 296 | 18,761 | 1,167 | 20 | 9 | 1 | 6* | 1 | 43 | Do. |
| 1907-08 .. | 26,385 | 2,880 | 282 | 18,998 | 35 | 20 | 11 | 1 | 4* | 1 | 27 | Do. |
| 1908-09 .. | 21,582 | 2,538 | 243 | 19,120 | 1,066 | 20 | 11 | 1 | 4* | 1 | 41 | Do. |
| 1909-10 .. | 22,393 | 1,412 | 136 | 10,303 | 1,908 | 20 | 13 | 3 | 4* | 1 | 51 | Do. |
| 1910-11 .. | 55,740 | 2,264 | 380 | 18,052 | 2,284 | 20 | 13 | 3 | 4* | .. | 57 | Do. |
| 1911-12 .. | 52,684 | 2,209 | 299 | 17,072 | 2,340 | 17 | 12 | 7* | 4† | .. | 49 | *Includes 4 Milty. Canteens. †1 Dining Car license. |
| 1912-13 .. | 158,310 | 2,508 | 349 | 19,256 | 2,750 | 17 | 12 | 8* | 4† | .. | 74 | *Includes 4 Milty. Canteens. †1 Dining Car license |
| 1913-14 .. | 162,046 | 2,067 | 311 | 17,954 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | |
| 1914-15 .. | 163,667 | 2,093 | 254 | 17,713 | 3,246 | 16 | 10 | 9* | 4† | 1 | 63 | *Includes 4 Milty. Canteens. †Includes 1 Dining Car license. |
| 1915-16 .. | 139,784 | 2,157 | 171 | 16,202 | 3,249 | 17 | 9 | 9* | 4† | 1 | 77 | *Includes 5 Milty. Canteens. † ,, 1 Dining Car license. |
| 1916-17 .. | 213,572 | 2,150 | 81 | 15,148 | 3,577 | 17 | 8 | 17* | 4† | .. | 78 | *Includes 11 Milty. Canteens. †Includes 7 Dining Car licenses. |
| 1917-18 .. | 305,385 | 2,515 | 91 | 18,332 | 4,581 | 17 | 13 | 19 | 3 | .. | 64 | |
| 1918-19 .. | 285,259 | 3,059 | .. | 22,241 | .. | 21 | 14 | 15 | 3 | .. | 46 | |
| 1919-20 .. | 135,563 | 3,841 | .. | 46,667 | .. | 23 | 9 | 7 | 3 | .. | .. | |
| 1920-21 .. | 135,563 | 3,841 | .. | 46,667 | .. | 22 | 15 | 8 | 3 | .. | 83 | |

*Statement produced by Lieutenant-Colonel Khambatta.*

| | Amount of fee for 1920-21 (Triennium). | Amount of bid for 1921-22. | Amount of bid for the 9 months ending 31st December 1922. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | |
| Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments. | *3,48,000 | 5,83,400 | 2,13,600 | *Includes Rs. 74,600 for Country Liquor shops of (1) Centre Street, (2) Malcolm Tank. (3) Kasba Peth. (4) Shukrawar Peth (Gadikhana) which were closed during 1921-22. |
| Rest of the District .. | *1,51,505 | 2,28,600 | 99,400 | *Includes Rs. 2,900 for Wagholi and Chakan which were closed during 1921-22 in the District. |
| | 4,99,505 | 8,12,000 | 3,13,000 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Centre Street .. .. | 9,000 | |
| Malcolm Tank .. .. | 13,000 | |
| Kasba Peth .. .. | 20,100 | |
| Shukrawar Peth (Gadikhana) .. | 32,500 | |
| | 74,600 | |
| Wagholi .. .. | 1,200 | |
| Chakan .. .. | 1,700 | |
| | 2,900 | |

*Statement produced by Lieutenant-Colonel Khambatta showing the total, consumption of country spirit in terms of proof gallons in the Poona City, Poona and Kirkee Cantonments and in the Poona District (exclusive Bhor State).*

| Year. | Number of shops in the whole district. | Population for the whole distret. | Population for Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments. | Consumption in Poona City and Poona and Kirkee Cantonments. | Rate per head of population in Poona City and Cantonments. | Consumption in the district. (Moffusil). | Consumption for the whole of the district Total of Columns 4a and 5. | Rate per head of population in Poona District. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4a | 4b | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | | | | Gallons. | Drams. | | | Drams | |
| 1904-05 .. .. | 68 | 9,95,330 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,47,589 | 7·1 | |
| 1905-06 .. .. | 67 | 9,95,330 | 1,53,320 | 1,00,064 | 31·3 | 20,156 | 1,20,220 | 5·8 | |
| 1906-07 .. .. | 66 | 9,95,330 | 1,53,320 | 1,05,671 | 33·1 | 23,794 | 1,29,465 | 6·3 | |
| 1907-08 .. .. | 66 | 9,95,330 | 1,53,320 | 1,12,171 | 35·1 | 29,098 | 1,41,269 | 6-8 | |
| 1908-09 .. .. | 62* | 9,95,330 | 1,53,320 | 92,659 | 29·01 | 22,468 | 1,15,127 | 5·6 | *Exclusive of two shops under departmental arrangement. |
| 1909-10 .. .. | 52 | 9,95,330 | 1,53,320 | 87,966 | 27·5 | 27,475 | 1,15,441 | 5·6 | |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 50 | 9,95,330 | 1,53,320 | 97,265 | 30·5 | 26,467 | 1,23,732 | 5·5 | |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 1,01,537 | 30·7 | 30,402 | 1,31,939 | 5·9 | |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 91,613 | 27·7 | 31,054 | 1,22,667 | 5·5 | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | .. | .. | .. | 1,32,620 | 5·6 | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 93,865 | 28·4 | 32,320 | 1,26,185 | 5·6 | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 1,01,290 | 30·6 | 19,895 | 1,21,185 | 5·5 | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 1,16,553 | 35·2 | 34,222 | 1,50,775 | 6·7 | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 48* | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 1,34,599 | 40·7 | 38,242 | 1,72,841 | 7·7 | *Exclusive of one temporary. |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 1,33,461 | 35·0 | 29,048 | 1,62,509 | 7·2 | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | .. | 1,20,203 | 31·5 | 27,457 | 1,47,660 | 6·6 | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 48 | 10,71,512 | 1,58,856 | 1,23,022 | 20·6 | 17,960 | 1,40,982 | 6·3 | |
| 1921-22 .. .. | 42 | 10,09,033 | 2,00,696 | 51,022 | 12·2 | 22,087 | 73,109 | 3·5 | |

No. 56.

REPLIES OF MR. K. A. GHASWALLA, BAR.-AT-LAW.

1. I have been an Abkari farmer myself, and was also a manufacturer of rum when my sugar factory was working. I am one of the members of the Poona Temperance Committee and take general interest in the drink question.

2. (*a*) I cannot approve of the policy laid down by Government. Even what is laid down therein is not attempted to be carried out by its servants. One has only to stand by a liquor shop to see how immoderate the customers are in the face of such temptation. The taxing of liquor has not checked the individual drinker. Nor does Government care to respect public opinion. The liquor offered to the public is deleterious. I may suggest, although I am personally concerned in it, that if liquor has to be provided the Government of Bombay should follow as far as possible the practice prevailing chiefly in Madras Presidency, *viz.*, encourage a sugar factory in each district and let the people of that district have liquor produced thereat from the bye-product of the sugar factory. This will not only encourage sugar industries but on the contrary help people to get double distilled liquor containing least quantities of fusil oil.

(*b*) My answer to (*a*) covers this question as I do not find any drunkenness checked as the result of Government policy.

3. The policy I would advocate is of total prohibition.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. It is a futile argument to say one cannot do without drink. I can say this from personal experience and other known examples that it is merely an idea and nothing more. In the days I indulged in alcoholic drinks I felt that I wanted it after fatigue and also to brace me up. With a strong control and knowledge of its evil effects, I have given it up now for years and I know now what a silly and nefarious habit it was and how foolish to feel that one could not do without it. As the mass of ignorant people cannot be expected to act on their own hook, total prohibition would be a practical measure. It has only got to be done and drunkards will get reconciled in a month or so and what a different class of people they will be as a result of it. The steps for carrying it out would be chiefly by legislation.

5. (*a*) It is an eyewash. Very little, if any, of illicit distillate can exist but that can be checked even by a vigilant staff. And even supposing a little illicit distillation is there it is comparatively much too small an evil to disturb one.

(*b*) The good example of this Government ought to give the other States an impetus to follow the good lead thus promulgated. As for the Indian States I cannot conceive of their keeping up the liquor traffic if the British Government stops it.

(*c*) The custom and habits regarding any vice ought to be checked at the very first opportunity, but if any custom bordering on religious thought exists then surely that can be provided for through proper channels.

(*d*) I think the so-called large establishment is a bugbear. Once it is prohibited by legislation even the Police could help in detecting it as a crime.

(*e*) If they do, then arrange to keep those drugs out of their reach. But after all it will be a lesser evil.

6. Of course, prohibition will have a large influence on the next generation which in itself ought to be a tempting bait for any well meaning Government having no vested interests to serve to abolish drink. I go further and say that it will have a good and a great moral, physical and financial effect on the present generation and that too within a very short time after the prohibition. One could easily have observed that during the picketing time of six months in Poona last year.

7. Legislation would be the best mode. If it is left to the opinion of the people I have no doubt that a thumping majority will be in favour of total prohibition.

8. Yes. I know people advocate toddy drink on one or another ground but one has only to be near a toddy shop to see how these poor consumers roll in gutters.

9. I personally do not believe in gradual reduction nor can such a mode be made to reach the real goal. It is a temptation which if kept before the consumer will always take him to it.

10. The measures suggested from (*a*) to (*k*) are nice sounding ones. They may have partial good results but nothing short of total prohibition can eradicate the great evil which is eating into the marrow of the vitality of the lower class of people and make them penniless, characterless and criminals.

11. I don't think local option is of any use as I hear officials do not respect it. If it is not acted upon, what is the good of having it.

12. I think the municipalities and the local boards are better constituted to understand the people's wants and am in favour of leaving the question of the determination of sale of liquor traffic to their choice. By all means let them also have the power, if necessary, of raising any revenue affected by any prohibition of the sale of liquor.

13. They ought to be to a large extent. My information is that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee are not followed or listened to. Instead of suggesting any change in the Committee, which I think ought to be less officialised than it is in its membership as at

present constituted, I should suggest a change in the angle of vision of Government who should be prepared to accept the advice of the Committee *in toto.*

14. Most decidedly.

15. I personally believe that this exploded theory of the loss of revenue is a mere bugbear. The increased vitality and better financial position of the consumers ought to be a sufficient compensation for the loss of revenue from the nefarious trade.

16. I am for prohibiting opium and hemp drugs because I know what harm opium has done on the vitality of the rising generation by an ignorant mother dosing her child with it for temporary comfort and one can easily see what effect *ganja* has on those who indulge in it.

17. It is very largely prevalent amongst lower classes. I am informed by medical men that the habit of giving opium largely contributes to the enormous death-rate.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. GHASWALLA replied to the President.—" I have been a member of the Temperance Association, Poona, for the last eight years. The Association has on its roll members of various communities, even from backward classes—Mr. Shinde is a member of the Poona Temperance Association. There are also members who represent labouring classes. We all take interest in the question of drink.

" Labouring classes will certainly not remain moderate if they once get addicted to drinking. Sober or drunk, they say, we do not like it and we will not drink to-morrow. Whether a drinker is better off or not he tries his best to go to liquor shops when they are open, even if they fall into debts. I do not think that the taxing of liquor has checked the individual drinker. So far I have not seen any deterrent effect on the drinking class inspite of the so-called extreme anxiety of Government to check this evil. Last picketing in Poona had brought to a standstill the consumption of liquor, and it had an absolutely good effect on the drinking class as a whole.

" I have seen in good many districts of the Madras Presidency sugar factories, which produce liquor from their by-product. The Bombay Presidency distillers have been extracting spirit from molasses when it is cheaper than mhowra.

" I know the opinion of our Cantonment Magistrate about the use of beer. If Government cannot really stop mhowra liquor, then I would reluctantly recommend beer, which at least will save good many lives from unnatural death.

" Both toddy and shindi should also be prohibited: Good and fresh toddy contains very little alcohol and is possibly less harmful than country liquor. I however consider that all alcoholic beverages are harmful. This is my opinion. It may be taken for what it is worth. I know good many do not hold this view.

" There is possibility of some illicit distillation going on in Nawapur, Sidpure, Bagalan and Kalwan if there be total prohibition, but that can be put a stop to by preventive establishment. Illicit distillation is not an insurmountable difficulty. It can be tackled.

" I am quite prepared to accept the principle of local option, and I have no doubt that a thumping majority will be in favour of total prohibition.

" If local option be permitted there will be a thumping majority in favour of total prohibition, and in that case I think there will not be any necessity for prohibition by legislation.

" The question of finance is a bugbear.

" I have declared from many public platforms that in any case this evil of drink must be eradicated, no matter how things would work and what taxes people are made to pay; in any case this evil must go. I have not heard a single dissentient voice raised against it. I have also had conversations with various sorts of people and I have had no one saying a word against it. "

To Mr. Baker.—" 'Moderation' cannot be defined. What would be moderate in one man's case may be excessive and poisonous in another's.

" I am prepared to prohibit toddy also.

" I think that drink in any form is bad.

" It is for Government to find out ways and means for suitably taxing the people on account of prohibition. I am not in a position to suggest them. "

To Mr. Jadhav.—" Fresh toddy also contains alcohol. It is from 1½ to 2 per cent. After six hours it goes up to 4, 5 and 6 per cent. 'Nira' also contains 1½ to 2 per cent. of alcohol.

" I have read about criminal tribes in newspapers. "

To Rao Saheb Desai.—" I know there is sugar in mhowra but not enough to make it commercially successful.

" So long as liquor shops are there, nothing will have an appreciable check on the drinking habits of the people. "

To Dr. Patil.—" Toddy as is generally sold in shops is intoxicating owing to adulterents such as *dhatura, bhang,* opium, etc."

"I should have total prohibition first, if choice is given between prohibition and primary education."

No. 57.

REPLIES OF MR. H. K. PATWARDHAN, PLEADER, AHMEDNAGAR.

1. I am a High Court Pleader practising for the last 14 years. I am a Councillor of the Ahmednagar Municipality for the last eight or nine years. I am on the District Local Board for the last three or four years. I have worked in the Taluka Local Board for three years. I have served on the Excise Advisory Committee for three years. I am Honorary Secretary of the Ahmednagar Education Society. I take part in the general political movements for the last 12 years. I am Provincial Secretary of the National Home Rule League for the Bombay Presidency.

I have given general consideration to the question regarding temperance reform and total prohibition.

2. In my humble opinion the policy enunciated by the Government of India does not go to the root of the matter; and so I consider it to be in the nature of a palliative. It is half-hearted. It has probably the effect of effecting a compromise with conscience. It is so worded that it may lull the conscience without involving any radical change which would tax the administration. The actual result of the policy as evidenced by the growth of the Excise revenue is eloquent testimony to its utter failure.

Half-hearted as that policy is, in actual practice, it has been almost ignored; and the average man thinks that the policy outlined has remained an empty platitude.

3. I advocate a policy of total prohibition. So far as the policy enunciated by Government is concerned, a whole-hearted attempt to carry it out would give better results. The auctioning of liquor-shops is most undesirable and I think is absolutely irreconcilable with the objects of that policy.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition for the simple reason that drink in any form in my opinion degrades humanity and its general effect on health is harmful.

It is certainly a very practicable measure. But drink in moderation is considered proper in the Western countries and it has become a social fashion and so I think there will be very great opposition and that, vary naturally, from all those who have adopted the standards of Western civilization.

I do not pretend to say that there was no drinking in Eastern countries, but I do maintain that in those countries drink was never considered fashionable. It was always condemned and regarded as a mark of ungentlemanliness. It was never considered to be a social virtue or what may be termed "respectable".

So many people will naturally consider it to be far from a practical measure. Personally I consider it to be a practical measure.

In order to carry out the measure I would suggest that all light wines and beer and shindi and toddy should be excluded entirely from consideration. These should be allowed; but all other drinks, like whisky and brandy and country liquor, should be prohibited, and even in this I advocate a policy of steady and increasing restriction so that in ten years the whole country or Presidency should go dry.

5. (*a*) Whenever illicit distillation is brought to notice, heavy penalties may be imposed by law.

(*b*) In view of the fact that I am not advocating total prohibition, this question does not arise for the present.

(*c*) I do not think any such customs and habits need be taken into consideration. Some Bhils think it a matter of their religious duty to steal and so was also Thagi a matter of duty to many. If there is serious discontent, it is our duty to face it and to put it down.

(*d*) No separate preventive establishment should be necessary in view of my answer. The ordinary police should do the work and must do it.

(*e*) There is no great probability of any drug being substituted. But if any such contingency arises, surely it can be considered when it actually arises.

6. I think it is a good argument. Since this country was practically free from the evils of drink, according to the testimony of Magasthenese and Chinese travellers, there is no reason why we cannot work our way back to such a condition.

7. Legislative prohibition would be the only effective method to start with but it will be necessary to back it up with efforts to rouse the social conscience by social work and by education. Employers of labour in large centres must take keener interest in this question.

8. Personally I would not apply the prohibition legislation to toddy or shindi shops.

9. In my opinion total prohibition is feasible but, as I do not think that it will be considered by many of our Western friends to be practicable, I venture to offer some suggestions regarding the control of consumption of all kinds of liquors so as to reduce it.

In my opinion a systematic temperance movement must be started. Shops which sell non-alcoholic drinks must be started. These should be clean and tidy and should provide for healthy amusement. Shows of a healthy kind should be encouraged. Clubs may be started

where the workers should foregather to spend their leisure hours and attempts must be made to give the workers such amusements as may help them to forget their surroundings and to lift their minds into higher and nobler realms of feelings and thoughts. Employers of labour can do these things easily. They may with profit to themselves start eating houses and clubs for their workmen. They may give higher wages to those workmen who do not drink and Government may give grants to people in the mofussil who will start such institutions. Co-operative societies may be induced and encouraged to help this movement.

Government also should reduce the number of shops and enforce their declared policy more earnestly.

10. (*a*) Rationing of shops is desirable.

(*b*) Increasing the price—This measure is of doubtful utility. The drinker who takes to drink as a habit, if he has to pay more for his drink, does so ; but his innocent children and wife and other members of the family suffer, and so increase in price of drink means starvation to the family. This aspect of the question is generally neglected, and so while increase in price is desirable there is a limit beyond which the increase should never be pushed.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops is desirable and should be resorted to side by side with rationing.

(*d*) This also is desirable together with (*a*) and (*c*).

(*e*) Reducing the strength of liquor. This cannot be done beyond a certain extent for I am told that liquor of 60 strength is not sufficiently intoxicating and so the habitual drinkers must drink more. If he took to brandy, he would get stronger drink and he would require lesser quantity which would make up the difference in price and get better intoxicated. However, I have no personal knowledge about this.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops ; this would also be very desirable.

(*q*) Restricting or prohibiting the importation and sale of foreign liquor.

This is desirable but I doubt if it can be carried out in practice without the co-operation of the European community and gymkhana clubs. At any rate cheap brandies and cheap and harmful foreign drinks should be prohibited.

(*h*) Regulating and, when necessary, prohibiting certain kinds of licences may be done if considered useful.

(*i*) Prescribing age limit for customers of liquor. This is quite necessary and the limit should be 21 years.

(*j*) Encouraging temperance work and subsidising temperance associations. This also is desirable and perhaps necessary also.

(*k*) Restricting or prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops ; this would be a very desirable step.

Large employers of labour should start workmen' s clubs and eating-houses and give larger wages to those workmen who do not drink. Co-operative societies should also usefully help the temperance movement.

11. As regards the introduction of the principle of local option I think it best to leave this question to excise committees. It is probable that in many cases, if local option is resorted to, we may come to total prohibition. This principle may encourage artificial agitation. I mean an agitation which is entered on the question of prohibiting drink but which does not take up real temperance work of educating public opinion and of giving those who drink better and nobler forms of amusement.

12. I would have no objection if the question of location of shops be left to local bodies. I would however say that local bodies should not be responsible in any way financially ; and for this reason, as it is possible that ideas of the rate of progress of the prohibition movement may vary in various localities, and also they may conflict with the pace of Government, it is better, in my opinion, not to leave the question to local bodies as suggested.

13 I do not think that the existing advisory committees have been found to be very useful. I would suggest that the constitution of these committees should be changed ; but at the same time I must say that the excise committees have not been useful because they have existed merely in theory. I have not given a thought to the question of constituting these.

14. I think the evil of drink is a powerful ally to crime and does affect the output of work adversely.

15. Coming to the financial aspect of the question, I must at the outset state that, if drink is an evil, there should be no question of considering the financial aspect. The revenue must be sacrificed.

When the question of making suggestion to make up the loss involved in the excise revenue is to be considered, one must enter a most emphatic protest on the way in which under the Reforms Act excise revenue was made a provincial source of revenue.

Every question of reform means money ; and the Government of India is to spend 62 crores of rupees, or perhaps 68 crores, on the defence of the country from external enemies and to do

nothing for eradicating internal enemies which mean moral degradation and crime and starvation which are the best friends of revolution. This is tragic if nothing else. The Government of India must therefore give the provinces more money.

The inequity of the financial arrangements between the provincial and central Governments must be condemned. While Government did nothing or nearly nothing for compulsory education and the drink question in the pre-Reform days it has in its financial arrangement under the Reforms absorbed all elastic and new sources of income into the central legislature and given such heads of revenue to the provincial legislature as are extremely inelastic. After, therefore, a word of protest, since the question of Indian national growth is vital to us, we must be thankful that we can at least enunciate movements which we consider material to our growth and to tax ourselves because there is no other way left until our central Government ceases to be irresponsible to the tax-payer.

We must finance a deficit of three crores. Part of it will come from light drinks allowed as per my statement. Part of this should come from decrease in the Police Department but even here law and order being Reserved Subjects no saving can be taken into account because we have no direct power to effect it. However, it is necessary to say that 15 to 20 per cent. of the cost on police should be cut down for less drink must mean less crime.

A heavy tax on gambling on race courses should be imposed as also a heavy licensing fee on the Turf Club.

A tax on amusements should be considered.

All mills and employers of labour should be made subject to a new tax so as to cover half of the total loss on this head.

Licensing of eating-houses in all towns should be introduced.

Agricultural incomes, including Jahagir villages, which are above Rs. 500 be taxed.

I propose that land revenue of lands which are irrigated by canals should be increased.

16. No.

17. The custom of giving opium is prevalent amongst the labouring classes and the middle classes which resort to opium because the poor mother wants to work while the child sleeps under the drug. The unfortunate habit is more due to economic causes and I would let that question be untouched for the present.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. PATWARDHAN replied to the President :—" I have served on the Excise Advisory Committee for three years. The Committee consists of the Collector, two representatives of the municipality and two of the cantonment.

" Advisory committees are practically ornamental bodies. Their recommendations were never carried out. It was personally due to Mr. Turner that some of the liquor-shops were closed.* The question of drink has also been considered by the league. The league is in favour of total prohibition. No other attempts except picketing, which was in force for four months, were made at Ahmednagar. I think wherever the movement against drink was started by caste panchayats, it worked very well. Sometimes it had kept liquor-shops empty. There was a good deal of drought. It gave a little momentum.

" Liquor is not generally taken in the month of *Shrawan*.

" There was a good deal of complaints when the picketing was not done for a time by caste panchayats. Picketing work has mixed up with politics and I personally considered it a waste of time. Picketing, if it is worked out by right sorts of people, may become harmless, but even then it will be a waste of efforts. I am very much against picketing. It complicates matters in so many ways. The rationing system is desirable.

" I would restrict foreign liquor also. For the sake of other communities I have excluded light wines. I am in favour of prohibition within ten years. I am not in favour of the idea of local option, because if we have a law passed by the present council it will be a law passed by our own Government and so I do not wish the question to be left to local option.

" By ' artificial agitation ' I mean an agitation which has as its object the prohibition of drink but which does not take into consideration the value of real temperance work by educating public opinion and giving those who drink better and nobler forms of amusement.

" There should be wholesale prohibition all alike for all communities. Temperance movement should be vigorously carried on during the ten years of prohibition. I think it will not be desirable to make an exception in any case.

" There will be some reduction in the Police Department as a result of decrease in crime. It will be about 20 per cent. of the cost on the police.

---

*Vide* statement produced by the witness, printed below.

" A heavy tax on gambling on race courses should be imposed.

" A tax on amusements should be considered.

" All mills and employers of industrial labour should be made subject to a new tax so as to cover half of the loss.

" Land revenue must come last.

" People will bear all these additional taxes if they will be convinced that this evil of drink is being completely eradicated. But they will even then feel that the Imperial Government does not help their Province when that Government spends in an irresponsible manner over 60 crores over the army. "

To Mr. Baker :—" Total prohibition of liquor will not be successfully passed in the Legislative Council I fear. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I would keep the present prices of liquor as it is.

" Liquor should be consumed on the premises and should not be allowed to be removed.

" I would have total prohibition first and primary education afterwards. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" There should be total prohibition within ten years. For Parsis and other drinking communities I have left light wines and beers untouched.

" I wish everybody in India to be a teetotaller.

" Those who come from Western countries should drink light wines and beer. "

To Mr. Madon :—" At present it will be better if this problem is tackled without having any revenue from death duties. If better brains would solve the difficulty about undivided Hindu families, I should certainly be not against them. The drink problem should be tackled with the help of such taxation only as is absolutely necessary."

*Statement produced by Mr. Patwardhan showing the consumption of liquor in the City and District of Ahmednagar.*

| Years. | City. | | District. | | Income. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gallons. | Shops. | Gallons. | Shops. | |
| | | | | | Rs. |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 23,780 | 6 | 32,318 | 20 | 2,35,752 |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 24,607 | ,, | 33,232 | ,, | 2,54,378 |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 19,687 | ,, | 28,051 | ,, | 2,58,642 |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 18,347 | ,, | 26,701 | ,, | 2,35,174 |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 21,203 | ,, | 30,838 | ,, | 2,53,291 |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 22,625 | ,, | 28,842 | ,, | 3,22,755 |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 24,558 | ,, | 35,273 | ,, | 3,88,593 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 31,634 | ,, | 37,295 | ,, | 7,52,751 |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 25,385 | ,, | 34,334 | ,, | 6,54,989 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 21,896 | ,, | 27,258 | 21 | 7,29,436 |

No. 58.

REPLIES OF Mr. D. P. JOSHI, ASSISTANT WEAVING MASTER, OLD MILLS, SHOLAPUR.

1. I am an Assistant Weaving Master in the Sholapur Mill, and in that capacity I daily come in contact with and have ample opportunities of knowing at first hand the social customs of the labourers in my department, numbering about two thousand and belonging to several castes some of which are noted for their drinking habit.

2. (*a*) The excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 is in my opinion faltering, half-hearted and does not respond to the public wish. The two communities of India—Hindus and Mahomedans—look down upon drinking as a vice and shun it as totally forbidden by religion. Not only the higher strata but also the common people of both communities abstain from drinking. It is the uneducated ignorant mass that is given to the vice, and even among them it is not a source of pleasure but is a sure sign of mental weakness. With men of character, both among Hindus and Mahomedans, the use of alcohol even in moderation is never taken as a habit or thing allowed for pleasure's sake but is always detested. Consequently, leaders in these communities stand in sympathy and lend their support to any measures directed towards the extinction of this vice. Under the Peshwas very strict rules were enforced for the distillation of liquor with the avowed object of keeping the subjects, as far as possible, from succumbing to this vice. Looking to the astonishingly low consumption of liquor at that time we might be justified in saying that their attempts were crowned with success. Under these circumstances, the present Government also is expected to protect the ignorant masses against the disastrous consequences of liquor, which are threatening to ruin whole castes. By the adoption of the above policy, Government has however undertaken trafficking in liquor and has facilitated the sales of obnoxious drinks by allowing the vendors to open shops in the midst of healthy and prosperous localities. It has never encouraged, but has thwarted successfully, the benevolent activities towards the extinction of this vice even of highly respected persons under one excuse or another. Government is, besides, exposing itself to the charge that it is making revenue out of the degrading habit of a people entrusted to its care.

It is also interesting to note the wide difference in policy adopted by the Government of India in the case of the opium question of the Chinese people and the drink question of Indians. No consideration of the loss of revenue ever stirred the Government from its settled policy of eradicating the vice from among the Chinese people within a period of 10 years, if not less. No half-way-house policy was followed. No due provision was made for the needs of persons who might be taking opium in moderate quantities. The fear of smuggling was never allowed to dominate the policy of total stoppage. A firm foot was placed to wipe off the disgrace and we were told by one of the Secretaries of State that there were few things which Englishmen had reason to regard with more pride than their policy regarding the opium question. Compare this with the excise policy of Government. It has no desire to interfere with those who use alcohol in moderation. On the other hand, it thinks that it is its duty to provide for such needs. It is also afraid of stimulating illicit production. It is no pride to Government to see this vice eradicated from among the poor and ignorant masses.

(*b*) The policy as actually carried in practice is much watered down. It has put no effective check on intemperance. Never was the consideration of revenue absolutely subordinated to the furtherance of the policy. In practice the goal is maximum revenue with a restricted consumption at the most, without even risking the chance of illicit production by appreciably increasing the price of liquor. The revenue has been continuously growing without seriously touching consumption. Country spirit has been kept proportionately cheap from the commencement of war in spite of the general increase in all commodities.

In this Presidency the average yearly consumption of country spirit during the five years ending 1913-1914 was 2,700,000 proof gallons, while during the five years ending 1918-19 it was 2,640,000, or a decline of 2·2 per cent. During the same period, however, the average revenue was enhanced from Rs. 1,99,80,000 to 2,80,29,000, *i.e.*, an increase of 40 per cent. From this it will be obvious that the price of country spirit rose by something less than 50 per cent. The figures of local consumption for the city of Sholapur and of the revenue derived do not show any different account. There is only a paltry reduction of about 3·7 per cent. in the consumption of 1915-16 and that of 1920-21, and the price of liquor including the duty and licence fees is enhanced by about 53 per cent. During the years 1914 to 1918 the consumption was continuously growing and it was only when the licence fees were increased by 400 per cent. at one stroke, that the consumption began to decline slightly without affecting the revenue in the least. Compare this with the general rise in the cost of living and the accompanying rise in wages which may be taken to be about 80 per cent. According to Government figures, such a necessity of life as milk rose in price by 91 per cent. The fact is therefore clear that the swollen revenue is in no way due to any special endeavours to restrict consumption by getting out a maximum

revenue, but is entirely the outcome of extraneous circumstances, which have lowered the price of money all the world over. A search for a plausible argument as to why liquor was sold at so cheap a rate and as to why no endeavours were made to bring it on a level at least with the necessities of life is certainly bewildering.

3. The policy that I would advocate is to treat liquor as a luxury and to tax it so highly as to place it generally beyond the reach of poor people. This must be accompanied by a reduced production with the ultimate object of bringing the production and consumption to meet each other on the minimum basis. I do not make much of the bogey of illicit production. It may go on for some time and attempts are sure to be made to distil liquor stealthily, provided the job is found tempting enough. But I do maintain that this is not likely to foil the main object, that of freeing ignorant people from the clutches of this vice. Illicit production may replace a part of the reduced consumption but it will never replace the whole of it and, if meted with exemplary punishment, it is never likely to be carried on on any large scale. Government is trying to put more tax on salt and yet the question of illicit production was never taken to be so serious in that Department.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition and I do not think it to be practical. But I believe that the consumption may be carried down to the minimum by restrictive measures.

5. (*a*) I have answered the question along with no. 3.

(*b*) I believe Indian States may be persuaded to take the same restrictive measures as we shall be taking and the question of liquor may be treated as inter-states.

(*c*) There are few classes who will take it as a serious interference with their habits and customs if alcohol is made dear and generally unavailable. I am not advocating total prohibition and so those who will insist on the use of liquor and can afford to pay the enhanced price will have it.

(*d*) I do not think that such a state will continue for a long time if the higher authorities are keen and watchful enough.

(*e*) It is not quite likely that people take to other drinks if they are prohibited from getting liquor. I may suggest that a propaganda may be started for engaging the recess hours of labourers for some better class amusements through cinemas, etc.

6. It is possible to eradicate the vice from among the illiterate and ignorant masses, in course of time, by the enforcement of restrictive measures.

8. I would not apply the same restrictive measures to liquors like shindi which are less intoxicating and not so injurious to health.

9. I have answered this question with no. 3.

10. (*a*) With reduced distilled quantities it is necessary to have reduced rationing of shops. This is also not enough. Rationing of men must also begin.

(*b*) I have already advocated that.

(*c*) Not quite necessary.

(*d*) It is no use simply reducing the number of days and hours. Shops must be closed on particular days, as for instance in Sholapur, when the mills are closed and a few days after the pay days. The shops should be closed at 5 p.m. before the mills close and shall not be open till about 8 a.m. in the morning.

(*e*) Reducing the strength of liquor is also a necessity. The injurious elements are thereby proportionately eliminated.

(*f*) No shop shoud be allowed to be opened near factories and work-shops and in the locality of work people. It is better to have these far away from busy places to minimise temptation to the work people.

(*g*) I would rather advocate very high importing duties on foreign liquor.

(*i*) The restriction of age to 21 is necessary.

(*j*) Though temperance associations have little effect on habitual drunkards, their trials may persuade new comers from joining the rank.

(*k*) It is worth while trying to prohibit the removal of liquor from shops.

11. I am in favour of local option and I would suggest that, if 75 per cent. of municipal voters residing in an area of 100 yards about the liquor shop show their unwillingness to suffer the existence of such a shop in their streets, it should be taken as a substantially solid public opinion for the removal of the shop.

12. I am not in favour of investing local bodies as at present constituted with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their areas.

13. The existing advisory committees do not seem to do any useful work and if the principle of local option is introduced their existence will be superfluous.

15. The result of my recommendations will not be absolute extinction of excise revenue. At the most they will lead to some reduction which will be compensated for by the expanding revenue. If, however, it was found that we cannot lose this revenue for the growing needs of education, etc., the Government of India should be pressed to provincialize income-tax.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. JOSHI replied to the President :—"I am connected with the mill in Sholapur for the last 14 years. Sholapur is a big industrial centre. There are, on the whole, 20,000 mill operatives in all mills. Some castes generally get drunk on certain occasions and at the time of marriage ceremonies. For labourers we have provided facilities for games and other inducements in mills. We have given them gymnasiums. Still some of them largely patronize liquor shops. Many of them, though not habitual drunkards, get themselves drunk too much on certain occasions.

"I have not directly interested myself in temperance work or in the picketing movement but through my friends I am connected with these. Salees to a great extent, and Mahomedans, Dhors, Chambars to a less extent, and servants of Europeans are all addicted to drinking.

"There are five liquor shops in Sholapur.

"Hindu and Mahomedan weavers, who do not drink, are physically strong and are also in a position to stand intellectually higher than others.

"For the last four or five years we have introduced the creche system. From the children that come to this creche, I have ascertained the bad effects of drinking among the Mahomedans and Salees, especially the latter. The children of drunkards are always sickly and weak. While those of non-drinkers are strong and healthy and plump. Moreover, non-drinking Hindus turn out more intelligent and quick work than their drinking co-workers—Salees, etc. (Here the witness promised to furnish the Committee a statement showing the percentage of absentees in each community on the three days following the pay day.)

"Looking to the consumption of drink, I do not think that the present prices of liquor are sufficiently high. They should be raised from 50 to 100 per cent. It is my intention that the liquor must be made practically prohibitive and must also be kept out of the reach of the ignorant and the poor people.

"I am not in favour of total prohibition and I do not think it to be practicable. But I believe that consumption may be cut down to the minimum by restrictive measures. The supply also must be automatically reduced. I am of opinion that prohibitive prices will reduce the number of consumers."

To Mr. Madon :—"A weaver who runs one loom gets Rs. 22 and one who runs two looms gets Rs. 44. They spend heavily on drink on marriage days. I have not got figures of average consumption, but now we are trying to get up such figures.

"I do not want to look to those who can take care of themselves. I think I am only concerned with the poor labouring classes, and in their case, if there will be prohibitive prices, there will be no necessity for passing any legislation, prohibiting liquor altogether. To avoid excesses only prescribed quantities should be sold at one time."

To the President :—"I am not in favour of investing local bodies as at present constituted with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their areas. *Intelligentsia* is not properly represented there.

"I suggest that the Government of India should be pressed to provincialize income-tax."

To Dr. Patil :—"Better work is generally done by those who do not drink."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol :—"It is not possible for us to say whether opium is given to children or not. So long as the children are in the Mill, we see that they are not being given opium."

*Statement furnished by Mr. Joshi.*

| Months. | Hindus. | | Mahomedans. | | Salees. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. of hands engaged. | Average percentage of absentees. | No. of hands engaged. | Average percentage of absentees. | No. of hands engaged. | Average percentage of absentees. |
| November 1921 .. | 513 | 13·6 | 203 | 14 | 152 | 19·5 |
| December ,, .. | 496 | 12·4 | 214 | 19·9 | 158 | 20·7 |
| January 1922 .. | 504 | 13 | 200 | 21·3 | 164 | 12·8 |
| February ,, .. | 498 | 16·8 | 206 | 21·3 | 164 | 21·3 |

No. 59.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Dr. V. C. GOKHALE of Poona* replied to the President :—" I am practising in Poona for the last 20 years. I have seen many bad effects of opium amongst children. I am of opinion that wherever possible one should try to do without opium. The custom of giving opium to children is prevalent amongst the illiterate. The literate also give it in some other form, *viz.*, soothing pills which contain opium and codin. Middle-classes give ' bal-goli ' which also contains opium.

" For some years I have been a member of the Temperance Association, Poona. I do not think that the Association is very actively working. I believe that the drink habit is largely prevalent amongst the labouring and poor classes. I am of opinion that drinking is a moral curse and a social degradation. A drunkard suffers physically, financially and morally.

" One ounce of drink once a month would do no harm.

" An opium-eater suffers from constipation."

To Mr. Madon :—" Opium in the hands of a medical man is a very valuable drug. Pure alcohol I rarely use. Both opium and alcohol are very useful in the hands of a doctor who administers them judiciously."

To Dr. Patil :—" Moderation is the first step to excessive drinking and hence I consider it better to avoid even moderate drinking.

" Alcohol is not at all necessary for those who have to work hard."

No. 60.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. SIVRAM HARI SONIMALI of Poona* replied to the President (in Marathi) :—" I belong to the Mali community of Poona. I have not touched drink during the last 20 years though I was a confirmed drunkard before that period. A good many people in my community are addicted to the drink habit. Fifty out of hundred leave drinking in the month of Bhadrapad. I left drinking of my own accord as I came to the conclusion that it was bad and that it had ruined me financially. "

To Dr. Patil :—" Women generally never drink. Husbands are in the habit of beating their wives when under the influence of drink. In the vicinity of liquor shops there are usually shops selling food made of oily substances and mutton, which contribute to increase the intoxication. As these food shops are quite close to the liquor shops, the servants in the latter generally fetch the dishes for their customers. Formerly, dancing parties were held in the liquor shops and *muralies* used to take part in them. During the picketing days all were happy. The general consensus of opinion among the drunkards themselves will even be against liquor. When questioned in their sober moments, the drunkards desire the temptation to be removed from their sight. The very sight of liquor shops draws them there.

" Children are given opium by women in order to silence them and enable them to go to their work. "

To Mr. Mehta :—" If shops are located even at a great distance, drunkards will go there, and that will make no difference either in the sale of liquor or in the drinking habits. "

*No written replies were furnished by this witness.

No. 61.

REPLIES OF MR. V. R. SHINDE, B.A., GENERAL SECRETARY, DEPRESSED CLASSES MISSION SOCIETY OF INDIA, POONA.

1. Missionary; twenty years' work among the depressed and backward classes of the different provinces of India.

2. (*a*) Very unfavourable; (*b*) *Nil.* It is no part of the duty of any Government to provide for the need of drinkers. Why should not then Government supply food to the famine stricken, a truer and greater need?

3. Total prohibition within four years.

(*a*) In the first year education be separately provided for by special taxation.

(*b*) In the 2nd medical education be separately provided for by special taxation.

(*c*) In the 3rd Courts and police be separately provided for by special taxation.

(*d*) In the 4th Preventive expenditure be separately provided for by special taxation.

5 (*a*) and (*b*) By strict prevention of contraband.

(*c*) No such classes, except some Parsees and a few Europeans.

(*d*) Unavoidable.

(*e*) May be dealt with when the case actually arises.

6. I perfectly agree.

7. Prohibition, the only effective means.

8. Toddy may be exempted.

11 Only as the last resort. By electing thoroughly efficient non-official committees.

12. Yes. Only as a last resort; and even then the local bodies may be asked to meet half the deficit. The other half Government should meet best as they can.

13. No.

14. Yes. Disastrous.

15. Duties on imports of cotton goods, and on exports of some raw materials. Education be provided for by taxing land most cautiously and economically.

17. Largely among the backward and working classes. No exact idea of the death-rate, but health is undermined.

---

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. SHINDE replied to the President:—"I am General Secretary of the Depressed Classes Mission Society of India, Poona City. The general state amongst the backward and depressed classes is bad. Mangs, Mahars, Dhors, Chambars, Weavers and Sonars are all addicted to drink. It is my ambition to try and wean these people from drink.

"Since last Shimga—about 15 months ago—the Mangs have been absolute teetotallers. There were some lapses but on the whole the result is encouraging. The intellectual standard of the Mangs is very low. Very few can read and write. Literacy has nothing to do with the eradication of this evil.

"All Mahars and Berads always complain of temptations having been kept in their way in the form of liquor shops.

"During the last 20 years drinking is decidedly on the increase.

"Prohibition by legislation is the only effective means.

"So far as the lower classes and the depressed classes are concerned, the general consensus of opinion will be that Government legislation has, as if, come from heaven and they will not be against it on that score only. I also believe in their vow taking. Very few will break their vows if they will make them once.

"The problem of drink is easy of solution in rural tracts.

"I am in favour of total prohibition within four years.

"Lower and depressed classes will prefer to get themselves taxed in any way on the lines decided by Government experts, if this evil of drink is completely eradicated."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"I have actually seen children growing rickety on account of opium being administered to them."

To Dr. Patil:—"Unfermented and unadulterated toddy may be exempted. In Mangalore and Calicut they actually live upon toddy, taking only one meal in the evening."

To the Revd. Mr. Macnicol:—"Local option should be resorted to as a last measure, by electing thoroughly efficient non-official committees."

## SURAT WITNESSES.

### No. 63.

### REPLIES OF MR. D. P. CHINCHALKAR, PLEADER, AMALNER.

1. I am a pleader of 12 years' standing. During this period I have been taking great interest in social, religious and political questions of the day. I have specially visited several villages and approached several communities in connection with the present anti-drink movement and have been able to study thereby the general public opinion and situation on the questions to be answered. I am the Secretary of the Taluka Congress Committee, Amalner, and it is in that capacity that I am answering these questions.

2. (*a*) The policy as laid down in the extract is not a proper one. Government should not at all think it to be one of its duties to make due provision for those who want to drink moderately. Drinking is a vice and when Government takes upon itself the business of providing for it, it is but inevitable that the vice should spread rapidly in the country in spite of Government's declarations that they do not wish to encourage it to an excess or they wish to minimise the temptations to those who do not drink. It is because the Government has undertaken to provide liquor to the people and looks upon it as an important source of revenue that this vice is found to have increased in the country to an enormous extent in spite of the natural tendencies of this nation towards total prohibition.

(*b*) The policy, in the first place, as stated above is quite mistaken and is not approvable. Yet certain principles such as minimising temptations, discouraging excesses, subordinating all considerations of revenue, restricting the number of liquor shops, etc., are stated therein to make it appear outwardly as if Government is really bent upon checking the evil. But looking to the actual state of things prevalent in this Presidency at least, the policy as laid down is not at all being carried out. The statistics of Government show that in the Bombay Presidency the number of liquor shops and the consumption of liquor have positively increased from 1905-06 till today. Instead of trying to put any effective check on the vice, Government seem to have encouraged it by offering greater facilities for the vice and by offering to protect the vicious people under the pretext of safeguarding their individual liberties. In adopting this detrimental policy the considerations of revenue have prevailed more upon the Government.

3. A radical change in the above policy is needed. Government should declare immediate total prohibition to be its aim, to be achieved within a definite period of four or five years and the whole policy hereafter must be directed to reach this end.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. The majority of the population of India is made up of Hindus and Mahomedans whose religions forbid drinking as a great sin giving rise to the greatest evil consequences. I have full belief that total prohibition is bound to succeed as a practical measure in India. The nation is instinctively in favour of total prohibition. To attain this end very early a total change as stated above is essential in the present policy of Government, which is responsible to a great extent for the present spread of the evil. Drink is not one of the necessities of life in India and the public will most willingly help Government to the fullest extent in carrying out successfully the policy of total prohibition.

5. (*a*) Illicit distillation should be treated as a crime as at present. Such offences would be rare as the vice among the people would decrease.

(*b*) It is expected that the Indian States would also follow the policy of the British Government in this respect. We can depend upon the public opinion in the Indian States also for promoting the desired object in their territories. The prohibition will not at all have to be enforced upon them but they will very gladly accept and follow the example set up by the British Government. Thus, total prohibition is quite practicable in Indian States also.

(*c*) This objection is not really so much worth considering as appears to be at the first sight. Even those who drink are perfectly conscious that it is a bad habit which they have fallen into. The drunkards themselves and their families would feel it a blessing if their bad habits are put a stop to. The discontent, if any, would be purely imaginary and would be nothing as compared with the discontent prevalent in the country now on account of the present excise policy of Government. There would be no discontent as the people would realize the improvement in their economic condition. Just as the framers of the Penal Code never cared for the discontent of certain criminal tribes in India by the enforcement of that law, so the Government need not at all be afraid of the discontent of a few drunkards while following the policy of total prohibition.

(*d*) A very large establishment would not be needed for the purpose. Most of the work can be done by the present police establishment.

(*e*) The probability of people taking to other intoxicants is also not so great as may be supposed and if at all there is such a probability it should be no reason against adopting the policy of total prohibition of liquor.

6. Prohibition will be effective even in the present generation. In India the craving for the vice has not come from within, but its spread is due to extraneous causes and we can hope to free India from this vice even in the present generation.

7. In our opinion legislation is the most powerful means in the present situation of the country for attaining the object. After it is once resorted to, several other methods would voluntarily be taken up by the people in order to supplement and facilitate the efforts of the legislation towards this most desired goal, *e.g.*, caste panchayats will be able to give a more effective turn to their resolutions and so on.

8. The principle of prohibition should be applied to all liquors, as all of them are injurious to the health of the people.

9. Absolute prohibition is desirable and practicable in India. The object of gradually reducing the consumption, if sincerely followed, must necessarily lead to the result of total prohibition in course of time.

10. As we are in favour of the principle of abolishing the liquor traffic altogether we cannot agree with those suggestions which have the slightest effect of continuing and encouraging the vice. The policy should hereafter be to abolish all the liquor shops in five years, or even before that period. Every year one-fifth of the present number of shops should be abolished, together with one-fifth of the present consumption. No person below the age of 25 should be allowed to purchase liquor. The system of sales of liquor shops by auction should immediately be abolished. The price of liquor should also be increased so as to be forbidding. Prohibition societies should be encouraged by every means. The removal of liquor from shops should also be prohibited. All these means should be resorted to till total prohibition.

11. Till total prohibition is effected, and also as a means for arriving at that goal, the right of local option should be everywhere extended for the present. If the majority of municipal members or voters in any municipal district express their desire that there should be no liquor shops within their area, such shops must be first abolished by Government. Similarly, if the majority of land tax-payers or local board voters express their desire that there should be no shop within their area, such shop should be first abolished.

12. As our aim is total prohibition and eventually the abolition of all liquor-shops, this question does not survive.

13. No. The existing Committees should be abolished. They are found to be of no use as they have no executive powers and their advice is scarcely heeded.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to an increase in crime often times; even the most serious offences of grievous hurt, culpable homicide, etc., are attributable to this vice. Quarrels, simple hurts, rioting and affray by drunken persons and petty offences against property also to satisfy this vice are of everyday occurrence. Total prohibition would put a stop to nearly one-third of these crimes.

The evil has necessarily a detrimental effect on the output of work—physical as well as intellectual. A labourer addicted to this vice may show for a moment that he works more rapidly than another who does not drink, but in the long run he will not be able to pull on with the other. Similarly mental derangements are often due to this vice. When once people catch this vice, it becomes impossible for them to ever remain temperate. So the evil must be checked at its very root.

15. When it is once admitted that the evil of drink has to be stopped, we must do it wholeheartedly and at all costs. All considerations of revenue must be dispensed with and we must be prepared for a good deal of sacrifice in other respects to check this evil anyhow. If the liquor traffic is to be done away with altogether, the present Abkari establishment can also be much reduced. Rewards may be offered to those who detect illicit distillation. The present Police Department may be entrusted with the detection of Abkari offences as well and they will need additional help only at some places where there are more chances for offences. No doubt, our Presidency at the first sight is placed in a very puzzling and deplorable situation inasmuch as, if we want to have the advantages of education, medicine, justice, etc., we are in a way compelled to leave the vice as it is. We have to derive all the benefits of our life with the help of this tainted money. But the hitherto followed excise policy of Government is mostly the cause of this situation. Within five years Government must be able to adjust its income and expenditure in such a way that it will no longer require the present Abkari revenue for its maintenance. It must for the highest welfare of the people find out the detailed ways for the adjustment. The people may go on for some time without higher education and medical help, etc., in order to root out this evil. We can find out several more ways for savings by retrenchment than at present proposed. The number of several high salaried posts should be reduced as also the pay, and in every spending department the expenditure should be cut down. Government must learn to cut its coat according to the cloth and if there is really a will there is certainly a way. If Indians are appointed to several posts which are now occupied by Europeans there is likely to be a considerable economy. The Finance Department must find out by all means a satisfactory solution to this difficulty by curtailing the present expenditure wherever possible.

16 and 17. We do not propose to reply to these questions as the vice of opium does not appear to have spread so much in this Presidency as that of liquor which requires immediate total prohibition.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. CHINCHALKAR replied to the President :—" I admit that so far as the figures for the past six or seven years are concerned there has been a continuous decline in the consumption of country liquor in the Amalner Taluka, but the consumption of foreign liquor has gone up. As regards foreign liquor, I have not been able to get any statistics to prove my statement. I am not aware that the license fee on foreign liquor has been steadily on the decline, except for the year 1921-22. I base my statement on the information given to me by my clients and others that as price of country liquor has gone up, people have resorted to foreign liquor. I have not tested this information by asking keepers of foreign liquor shops, but some twelve years ago there was no foreign liquor dop in Amalner and now there is one which appears to me to be going on prosperously. In fixing the relation between the prices of country liquor and foreign liquor, consideration should be given to the strength of the liquor.

" The resolution of the Amalner Municipality to prohibit the location of liquor shops within the municipal limits was passed with one dissentient, who was himself a liquor contractor. I will not admit that the members who voted for prohibition were all people for whom drink was totally forbidden. Some of them, so far as I know, were in favour of temperance though not total prohibitionists.

" My proposal to reduce one-fifth of the number of shops every year can be easily put into practice in East Khandesh, because the chances of illicit distillation in that district are very rare. This proposal should be put into practice irrespective of the intensity of the drinking habit in a locality.

" The population of Amalner is 16,329 and there is one shop of country liquor and one of foreign liquor. There are about 3,000 mill hands and they have taken too much to this vice. As the Amalner Municipality has passed a resolution in favour of prohibition, prohibition should be enforced first in that town. If the shop near the mill area is closed, the mill hands will not resort to drink. In my opinion, the nation is instinctively in favour of total prohibition. In Amalner more than 50 per cent. of the municipal voters declared in favour of prohibition, including 40 or 50 leading mill hand voters and there were still others who had not been approached. I would prefer total prohibition by legilation to local option. If any area is not in favour of total prohibition it is because the policy of Government is responsible for that state of things. Though the instincts of the nation are in favour of total prohibition, in certain cases those instincts have been overpowered by Government's policy. I would prefer legislation for prohibition ; and if that is not undertaken, then prohibition should be enforced at least in places where 50 per cent. of the male adults are in favour of it ; but Government should not wait for such signatures as before starting the shops they had never consulted the people. I am not in favour of Government providing licensed shops or allowing private people to sell drink for people who are in the habit of drinking now. Government should not consider it to be their duty to supply liquor to those who want it.

*Q.*—How will you provide for those who are in the habit of drinking ?

*A.*—It is not the duty of Governments to provide for them.

*Q.*—Should private people be allowed to supply unlicensed ?

*A.*—No.

Mr. Jadhav : You want virtue to be introduced by compulsion ?

*A.*—I want vice to be done away with by compulsion.

" When one-fifth of the shops are closed for the first year, it will be a notice to the drinking people that they will have to give up their habit within five years.

"As regards the question of finance, I have considered the question in relation to the changed situation, and I think in five years Government would be able to deal with the situation. There is still further scope for retrenchment and people will be willing even to have new indirect taxes. I would suggest court fee on the Original Side of the High Court, entertainments tax in the mofussil, death duties and duties on succession certificates. I have not collected information regarding the approximate revenue these would yield. The details can be worked out by the Finance Department.

" As regards the present rationing system, I think the reduction in the rations should be 20 per cent. every year and not only 10 per cent. Moreover, the rationing policy should be extended also to foreign liquor ; otherwise, the result would be increase in the consumption of foreign liquor at the expense of country liquor."

To Mr. Madon :—" As regards the collection of death duties, I admit there is some difficulty in the case of Hindu joint families where estates get into the possession of heirs automatically, and I have not thought over the difficulty of getting over this. Still I would insist on imposing death duties. It might be practicable to levy duties when names are sought to be changed in the land records or when partitions are made."

To the President :—" As regards the official figures of consumption I want to bring to your notice that these figures cannot be entirely relied upon. The figures of consumption for Amalner in 1921-22 are 534 and 4,143 gallons. The duty per gallon is Rs. 3-10-0 and

cost of extraction is Rs. 1-13-0; thus the cost price is Rs. 5-7-0. The sale price of a gallon is Rs. 10-8-0. That is the difference per gallon is about Rs. 5. So the gain on the whole sale is only Rs. 20,000, but the bid for that year was Rs. 14,000. Out of the Rs. 6,000 the shop keeper must have met his carting charges, interest on capital, etc. This year the Amalner contractor had bid for Rs. 28,000 knowing full well that the consumption has since been on the decline. Unless, therefore, there is some underhand dealing no profit could be made."

Revd. Mr. Macnicol: He can raise the price. He could not do that ten years ago, but now he can raise the price.

*A.*—If he raises the price people will go in for foreign liquor.

To Mr. Jadhav:—"In East Khandesh there are few facilities for illicit distillation. There were very few, I remember only one or two cases, of illicit distillation during the last five years in the Amalner Taluka. If liquor is not available at all, I do not think illicit distillation will increase. A small preventive establishment would do, and the present staff can be greatly reduced. When crimes are committed in villages, the village police would be able to cope with them. The village people will assist in the detection of illicit distillation, and members of the Madyapan Pratibandhak Mandal will also help."

To Mr. Madon:—"There are 25 members of the Amalner Madyapan Pratibandhak Mandal. Even a less number is enough to carry on the work. We confine our work to Amalner City itslf, because it is in the cities that we find this vice in increased evidence. We approach almost all the communities, and we have got the names of leading members of almost all communities."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"I want to have total prohibition in five years, by the reduction in the number of shops and the rationing system, worked simultaneously, so that the total result will be one-fifth less consumption in every one year.

"There are about 7 or 8 shops outside Amalner, where the consumption is about 1,000 gallons. If it came to a reduction in the number of shops, so far as the Amalner Taluka is concerned, I would have the one at Patonda abolished first, where there are fairs and bazars, and the evil effect there has been large in proportion. Other village shops are also located by Government at very short distances and they may also be gradually abolished. (The witness sent subsequently a list of these shops which is printed below.) As for the shop at Amalner, it has done an amount of harm, and it should be removed outside the municipal limits. At present it is situated within ten minutes walk from the mill and near the weekly bazar.

"As regards the rationing system, it should be proceeded with for the whole taluka of Amalner. Supposing 10,000 gallons are consumed this year, next year it should be reduced by 20 per cent. and that quantity should be distributed between the liquor shops, and these shops should be located at very distant places."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"There should be 20 per cent. reduction, and the details may be settled by Government. This should be brought about both by the rationing system and the decrease in the number of shops."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"Rationing should be proceeded with on the basis of the month. It does not matter if towards the end of the month for some days there is no liquor to sell. Government should not be so very anxious for the interests of those who want to buy liquor during those days. Of course, these are only some of the remedies, but I want prohibition to be introduced at one stroke. It is only because that solution is not forthcoming, that these alternatives are suggested till total prohibition is introduced. They should lead to total prohibition.

"The vend system should be introduced in place of the present auction system. There should be fixed price and fixed license fee. At present the prices go up by leaps and bounds, and Government allow it. Although I am not satisfied with rationing and reduction in the number of gallons sold, I want the price to be increased, so as to make the use of liquor prohibitive. The harm in the present system is that it gives scope for fraud, and the people are cheated. In the case of the millhands, they pay one rupee and get liquor worth 8 annas. They are robbed in every way.

"Of course, it is a rule that liquor should not be sold on credit, but drunkards find persons near the shop to give them credit, who take pro-notes from them for Rs. 25 and give them Rs. 10 and at exorbitant rates of interest.

"With regard to total prohibition and crime, experience in America shows that one-third of the crimes will be stopped. Liquor consumption in Ratnagiri may be higher than in Satara, although crime in the latter place is more. I have not with me the figures of the Ratnagiri District to-day. There are no statistics of Government in which it is said that drink is the cause of the crimes. I have to defend many cases in which drink is the cause of crime. In one case, two friends got drunk and one murdered the other."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"I would not endorse the view that because beef fetches a good price, Government should undertake cow-killing. I do not like it on religious grounds. Similarly, Government should not go in for liquor business; it is interfering with religion.

" It should be made the duty of the village authorities to help Government in the matter of prohibition, just as in the case of cognisable offences. Government must bring pressure upon the mamlatdars, and they must also advise the villagers not to drink, just as they take care of the health of the villagers. I think the Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Police may be entrusted this duty. The abkari staff may be kept only in places where the offences are greater in number.

" The Indian states will follow the foot steps of the British Government.

" Whether the people drink in the shops or at home, the effect is the same.

" In the case of local option, most of the drinkers of a village would vote for it. We have got signatures from people who were drinkers. For several months they have kept to their promise, although some have not. In the case of a referendum, women should have the right to give a vote.

" If Government adopted prohibition, the *Dharmagurus* would help Government.

" As regards revenue, all incomes above Rs. 1,000 may be taxed. The mills also may be taxed. The basis may be settled when we actually take up the work. They may be taxed on their outturn. There should be further retrenchment in the spending departments of Government ; though it can't be brought down to the former level. "

To Dr. Patel :—" In the case of the man who took to drink again after abstaining for three months, had the shop been removed he would not have taken to that vice. When that man took to drink, his companions also took to it, and about 50 men in the village followed him. If the temptation of the shop was not there, he would not have taken to it.

" In order to prevent people from going in for foreign liquor, its price must be increased by the imposition of heavy taxes, and the Bombay Government should demand something from the Imperial Government.

" Mill-hands are ruined economically as well as physically by drink. Some of them, who ere high salaried, take foreign liquor. Most of them have taken to the habit after coming to Amalner, because they get more income and the shops are close at hand. If the shops were removed, they would not drink. They drink more on holidays and pay day. In many cases, they drink when they have a quarrel with their wives, in order to forget their miseries, and not on account of any hard labour. Some of them are drunk even while at work during the day.

" An ounce or two of liquor a day may be given to those who require it under medical advice. I do not like the coupon system.

" If a mill-hand drinks, he uses up his reserve energy, and he cannot work for a longer period. Sometimes, he cannot work the next day. The atmosphere of the mill is injurious to his health, and drink makes it worse.

" I do not know whether the system of giving opium to children exists among the mill-hands. "

*Statement furnished by Mr. Chinchalkar showing village country liquor shops in the Amalner Taluka and the consumption of country liquor therein.*

| Village. | Year 1917–1918. | | Year 1918–19. | | Year 1919–20. | | Year 1920-21 upto only 31-1-21. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 30 up | 60 up | 30 up | 60 up | 30 up | 60 up | 30 up | 60 up |
| Palonda .. .. .. | 194 | 1,895 | 118 | 1,537 | 143 | 2,275 | 112 | 1,420 |
| Amalgaon .. .. .. | 327 | 3,602 | 90 | 2,576 | 47 | 2,498 | 18 | 1,673 |
| Takarkheda .. .. .. | .. | 2,472 | .. | 2,219 | .. | 2,734 | .. | 1,883 |
| Nanded .. .. .. | .. | 1,982 | .. | 1,868 | .. | 2,263 | .. | 1,498 |
| Marwad .. .. .. | .. | 1,925 | .. | 1,859 | .. | 2,390 | .. | 1,491 |
| Shirsala .. .. .. | .. | 2,794 | .. | 2,206 | .. | 2,404 | .. | 1,506 |
| Mandal .. .. .. | .. | 2,511 | .. | 2,045 | .. | 2,350 | .. | 1,312 |
| Janve .. .. .. | .. | 2,120 | .. | 2,457 | .. | 3,206 | .. | 1,631 |

*N. B.*—The figures in the last column are for 12 months only.

No. 64.

REPLIES OF MR. V. N. BARVE, B.A., LL.B., PLEADER, DHULIA, AND HONORARY SECRETARY, WEST KHANDESH LIBERAL ASSOCIATION.

In the following statement of answers, the paragraphs bear the same number as the questions to which they relate.

1. I am a pleader. I have taken some part in the temperance movement and have read some literature on the subject. As joint Honorary Secretary of the West Khandesh Liberal Association I am shortly going to undertake the work of recording the votes of the electors of Dhulia Municipality on the question of total prohibition.

2. (*a*) I do not agree with the excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Excise of 7th September 1905.

The policy is obviously based upon the underlying notion that the drink habit is not necessarily bad and that what is undesirable is excessive indulgence in drink and not its moderate use. It represents the general attitude of Englishmen towards this question. Before the advent of the British rule in India, the habit of drink, condemned by religion and public opinion alike and discouraged by the rulers, prevailed to a very small extent and amongst particular sects and tribes only.

The installation of the British in power changed the situation. Among the early English educated people drink became quite fashionable and people lower in the social scale also increasingly took to it, as the facilities grew. The civilisation of Europe, which I admire in many respects, is responsible for the spread of this vice not only among the native inhabitants of India, but also among those of Africa and America.

The policy of the Government of India, which can be easily explained in the English view of the case, has always been out of accord with the wishes and sentiments of the people of India. Indian opinion cannot appreciate the policy of non-interference with the habits of moderate drinkers, nor can it tolerate the idea of making any provision for the needs of such persons. As a matter of fact, it is impossible to open and maintain liquor shops for moderate drinkers, without continually adding to the class of drinkers, hard or moderate. It is absurd to place temptations within easy reach of the people and then to expect that the evil will not spread.

Nor do I think that the methods adopted by Government have been such as to achieve the end which they have had in view. Until recently, Government have been opening new shops in a number of localities, inspite of the protests of the local people. Liquor shops are located near high roads, factories, markets and even sometimes in fairs. These are not methods which would minimise the temptation, but on the contrary increase it.

(*b*) The actual results of the policy have been simply disastrous. The habit of drink has been steadily growing. The revenue from excise has risen to the enormous figure of four crores in the Bombay Presidency. The revenue obtained from the sale of country liquors mostly comes from the pockets of the poor. The poor people have been losing from year to year their hard-earned money, wherewith they could better feed and clothe themselves and their children. The effect on their physique has been very bad, and the resisting power has become less.

3. I do not advocate a change in the policy but its abandonment, in favour of the policy of total prohibition.

4. Yes, I am in favour of total prohibition.

My reasons are briefly as follows :—

(1) Alcohol, which is the principal ingredient of intoxicating liquors, has no food value.

(2) Alcohol, even when taken in moderate quantity, acts as a poison on the various systems of the human body and injuriously affects them. Scientific medical opinion is almost unanimous in condemning the drink habit and the use of alcohol even in medicines is being gradually restricted. The military verdict coincides with the medical verdict. The following poster, signed by five of the leading doctors of England, including Sir Thomas Barlow, Physician to the King, and Sir Fredric Treves, Surgeon to the King, was exhibited in all public places during the early months of the Great War. It was entitled "EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON NAVAL AND MILITARY WORK" and was addressed "TO ALL MEN SERVING THE EMPIRE". It said; "It has been proved by the most careful scientific experiments and completely confirmed by actual experience in athletics and was attested by Field Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C., etc., Field Marshal Lord Wolseley, K. P., etc., and many other army leaders that alcohol or drink,

(1) slows the power to see signals,

(2) confuses prompt judgment,

(3) spoils accurate shooting,

(4) hastens fatigue,

(5) lessens resistance to diseases and exposure,

(6) increases shock from wounds.

We therefore most strongly urge you for your own health and effeciency that, at least as long as the War lasts, you should become TOTAL ABSTAINERS.

It should be remembered that this appeal was made not by social reformers and sentimentalists, but by the most practical and responsible men at a moment of great peril in the life and death struggle for the existence of the British Empire.

(3) A large amount of crime, insanity, poverty and family unhappiness can be traced to the vice of drink.

(4) Drink is a vice and not merely a luxury. As Lord Chesterfield said in 1743, while speaking against the British Excise and License revenue derived from intoxicating drink, "Luxury is to be taxed, but vice must be prohibited."

(5) Drink is an unmitigated evil. And whether small or great, it is an altogether unnecessary evil.

I consider total prohibition to be a practical measure. It should be brought about in stages; but these should be few. Both Imperial and Provincial legislation will be necessary to bring about the reform. Abkari is, now a provincial and a transferred subject. The initiative must therefore be taken by the Provincial Legislature. The Imperial Legislature also must assist in the process, by enabling the provinces to stop the import of foreign liquors, if they so desire. The import of foreign liquors must be stopped, otherwise an embargo upon country liquors will only result in the increased consumption of foreign liquors.

5. I would answer the objections to the policy of total prohibition as follows :—

(*a*) The facility cannot altogether be stopped. Stringent measures will be necessary to prevent illicit distillation. It may not be possible completely to stop it at once. But the increased difficulties of procuring liquor will gradually restrict the vice and the temptation of illicit distillation as well. The danger of illicit distillation is often exaggerated. A well ordered Government, really bent upon enforcing prohibition, when backed by public opinion, ought to be able to find means to stop illicit distillation.

(*b*) The proximity of Indian States, no doubt, creates difficulties. It is desirable that the same policy should be followed in the Indian States. So far as the views of the subjects in the Indian States are concerned, I am sure they will not lag behind in demanding prohibition. I cannot here enter into the question of constitutional reform in Indian States. When prohibition is established in British districts and the same reform is demanded by public opinion in the Indian States, it will be time for the Government in British districts to request the Indian States to adopt the same policy. I do not think that the request will be refused in that event. What is essential however is that we are not to wait, until the Indian States move in the matter.

The Portuguese territory does not present in my opinion as large a problem as the Indian States, because the boundary lines, which will have to be guarded to prevent smuggling, are not very extensive. I do not know if any amendment of the Treaty with Portugal will also be necessary.

(*c*) I do not apprehend much trouble from the customs and habits of the people. I am not aware of any particular classes, who will rise in revolt, if they are deprived of their drink. In hilly districts there may be classes, who regard drink as necessary for their health on account of the bad climate. In such places, prohibition should be gradually introduced and even these classes will know by their experience that their bias in favour of drink was unfounded.

(*d*) No doubt a special preventive establishment will be necessary, but it need not be very numerous. It will be one of the duties of the ordinary police also to detect the crime and bring the offenders to book. I think temperance workers may well assist the department in detecting crime against prohibition. The presence of non-official workers in the field will also check the temptation to levy illegal exactions on the part of the establishment.

(*e*) I do not think there is much force in this objection. If actual experience prove the validity of the objection, it may be dealt with in future.

6. I think the argument that prohibition, although it might not be effective in the present generation, will have a large influence on the next, is perfectly sound. I think the appetite for intoxicants is not innate in man; in all cases the habit spreads through the exercise of friendly pressure. It is certainly easier to keep a man away from drink than to give him a taste of it and then to wean him from it. The argument certainly embodies the hope of all prohibitionists.

7. Prohibitive legislation will be indispensable to bring about complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor. The assistance of temperance workers will certainly be needed to make the atmosphere favourable for the reception of the legislation.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors, whether distilled or fermented. I would prohibit the use of toddy and shindi as well. I am aware of the fact that toddy and

shindi, when extracted fresh, are not considered to be deleterious. But I think that the extraction of these is a slow process and even what is called fresh toddy or shindi must undergo fermentation to some extent. Moreover, the concession of allowing extraction of toddy and shindi for drinking in a fresh condition is sure to be abused.

9. I need not answer this question.

10. The means suggested from (*a*) to (*k*) are useful in controlling consumption to some extent. I consider (*a*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*) and (*g*) as suitable expedients in the transition from the present state of things to complete prohibition.

11. I am not in favour of local option. When, as I fancy, public opinion is so strongly in favour of prohibition, local option is needless. It will only delay the reform and possibly create complications. It may be, that in exceptional places, the local opinion is against prohibition, but in this matter I will not allow the convenience of the few, to outweigh the convenience of the many.

12. I consider that investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their areas means resorting to local option in a way. Of course that would mean an advance upon our present condition, and the power ought to have been given to the local bodies long ago. But a prohibitionist can only consider these expedients as half-way measures and useful only so far as they go.

I would strongly protest against the suggestion of making local bodies responsible for raising any part of the revenues, that would be sacrificed by the exercise of the power to determine the number and location of the shops. The local bodies are not responsible for spreading the vice and raising the ill-gotten revenue. And if they assist in the process of reform, they ought not to be punished for that. To fill up the gap in the revenue is solely the concern of the provincial government.

13. I do not think that the existing Advisory Committees have done much useful work. In the first place, they are nominated bodies, which lack the confidence of the public. Secondly, the Collector may call their meetings when he likes and may or may not accept their advice.

Suggestions could be made to improve the constitution of these bodies, so that they will do useful work. But the reform, which public opinion demands at a single bound, is so far reaching, that it would land us beyond the stage of these advisory committees. I therefore consider it fruitless to investigate means to improve their constitution.

14. The evil of drink certainly contributes to an increase in crime. If proof were needed for this most obvious proposition, it would be abundantly found in the statistics of crime in the various States in America (the United States of America), where prohibition has been in operation for the short space of two years.

The habit of drink must also affect the output of work. The working classes cannot be expected to refrain from excessive indulgence and excessive drink most assuredly brings in its trail debility, disease and poverty, which cannot but diminish the efficiency of the worker. In the case of the workers especially complete prohibition is the only remedy to save them from ruin.

The fact that during the Great War, all the belligerent countries of Europe and America put great restriction on the consumption of liquor and introduced partial prohibition is an eloquent testimony to the degenerating effects of drink and the benefits of sobriety.

15. Though I would prohibit all drinking of alcoholic liquors, I would not deprecate the use of alcohol in industries. The question of using alcohol as a source of power and of manufacturing it from cheap materials, is receiving the attention of scientists and it is considered to have great possibilities in this direction. But the eventuality may or may not materialize. For the present at any rate, the prohibitionist must face the situation, as involving a practical extinction of the excise revenues. Means must therefore be found to make up the loss by fresh taxation to some extent. In considering the sources of fresh revenue, one cannot be unmindful of the fact, that there is room for saving money by retrenchment in the salaries of the higher services of the State. The work of reducing the salaries of the higher services will be easier, when they are sufficiently Indianised and that process must be greatly accelerated. Meanwhile fresh sources of income also must be explored.

I would recommend the following as possible sources of revenue :—

(1) Taxes on entertainments such as races, cinema shows, dramatic performances, etc.

(2) Assessment of all building sites in villages and towns.

(3) Death duties or succession duties.

16 and 17. I have not sufficiently considered the questions regarding opium and therefore am not prepared to make any definite suggestions in the matter.

Mr. BARVE replied to the President :—" I am aware of two instances where Government have opened a liquor shop in spite of the protests of the people—one at Sangamner in Ahmednagar District and the other at Ghoda in Poona District. To my knowledge there has been no such instance in my own district.

" There has been a decrease in consumption only during recent years ; it has taken place only during the last 15 years, and it is not great. The number of shops has also decreased to some extent. When I say that the habit has been steadily growing, I am taking into consideration the whole period since the commencement of the British rule. The declaration of policy by Government in 1906 does not mark any departure from the policy followed by them up to that time. There has been some decline in consumption since then, but with regard to that I would like to say that it fluctuates with the season. During a good year consumption increases, and in a bad year it decreases.

" I advocate total prohibition. People will have to co-operate with Government and temperance organisations will have to be started where they do not exist. In most places there will not be any difficulty in getting the majority of the people to vote for total prohibition. Only in a few places, it may be difficult. With regard to the removal of a shop I do not think that the opinion of the people like the Bhils, who are extremely backward and illiterate should carry much weight, and in the case of such people Government will have to take the initiative. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I do not think local option should be given to backward and illiterate people like the Bhils, because during the last 100 years their condition has remained as it was, and they might vote against prohibition. There will be few such classes of people who are backward and not able to form an independent opinion. "

To the President :—" All the illiterate people cannot be excluded from giving the vote.

" Any advance towards the goal of total prohibition should be backed up by public opinion, and reformers must try to create that atmosphere.

" No consideration should be shown to people who have no religious scruples against drink, because it is almost a crime to drink. As a transition stage, some concession may be shown in favour of people who can be trusted to drink moderately. The rationing system, with gradual decrease in the quantity of liquor, may be applied to them.

" As regards local option, a majority of two-thirds in favour of prohibition should suffice and the district must be taken as a unit. It will be better to begin in areas where people drink less, and where the facilities for illicit distillation are few.

" Government should declare it their policy that there should be total cessation of consumption within a period of eight years.

" As regards the revenue, the financial arrangement between the Government of Bombay and the Government of India is very unfair and we should get a larger share of the income tax revenue raised in this Province. In my view, there is much room for retrenchment of which I can give one instance, namely, the Governor's band establishment costing Rs. 50,000. As regards assessment of building sites, it should not be less than one rupee per house ; I cannot say anything about the maximum. It will depend upon the extent of the area, the locality and the site, and the importance of the village or town, just as in the case of land revenue where they have classified the villages into several groups, the lands of particular villages into certain classes, and taxed accordingly. A survey will have to be carried out in the same way and the building sites will have to be classified and valued.

" I shall make myself quite clear why I am against local option. Take the case of Poona. There is there a cantonment area and a town area. It is possible that the town committee may be against the sale of liquor and the cantonment committee may be in favour of it. The cantonment people should not be allowed to have it, because the whole of the town will suffer by it. If the wishes of a small portion in a large prohibition area were to be given heed to, the prohibition area will suffer as smuggling is likely to arise. I am in favour of having a large unit for the application of local option, preferably a district.. Of course, Government will determine the unit.

" As regards succession duties and the difficulties in the way of levying them, I think the difficulty could be obviated in this way : Supposing there is a family of three brothers and one of them dies, on his death one-third of the total estate should pay the duties."

*Q.* Suppose a family consists of A, father, and B and C sons. A dies. On his death one-third of his estate pays duty. Soon after, B dies. Half the estate will then again be liable to death duty. In such a case, don't you think it will prove a hardship ?

*A.* This difficulty will arise also in the case of separation.

*Q.* This succession duty is opposed to the idea of the joint Hindu family ? *A.* Yes, it is. There is opposition to every tax, but when people are convinced that Government are going to put an end to this evil and are also effecting retrenchment, they can be got round to accept these duties.

To Mr. Jadhav :—" In pre-British days the Bhils did not drink as much as they drink now. For my general statement, I have the authority of the report of Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone made in the year 1826. He says that abkari did not then yield more than Rs. 10,000. ' The use of spirituous liquors was forbidden at Poona and discouraged everywhere else. The effect of the system on the sobriety of the people is very conspicuous.' With regard to the moral character of the people, he says : ' Drunkenness, a peculiar vice of the lower orders, is almost unknown in the Maratha country, which has thus a decided superiority in morals over the old provinces. That arises from discouragement of the sale of spirituous liquors, and as the revenue from that source is insignificant, we should probably do well to prohibit it altogether'. "

*Q.* But that does not say anything about the Bhils ? *A.* Nothing specifically with regard to them.

" I am not one of those who say that a separate preventive staff will not be required, although I hold that the ordinary police can also be asked to do this work.

" I have seen the bad effects of toddy and shindi ; I have seen people becoming drunk with toddy.

" I have not collected any statistics about the relation between crime and drink in West Khandesh.

" As regards revenue, I do not think that the tax of Re. 1 which I propose on building sites in villages and towns, will be opposed in the same way as the salt tax. Salt is a necessity of life, and a tax on that will reduce consumption, which will have a bad effect on the health of the people. Where village panchayats have been established and house tax is already being levied, I would avoid this double taxation if possible. But if we cannot do without the tax, we must have that tax. If a proposal is made to the people that drink will be prohibited on condition that they agree to the imposition of house tax at Re. 1 per house, I think the majority will vote in favour of prohibition."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" I am only aware of two cases in which Government went in opposition to the wishes of the people in establishing liquor shops. If in cases like Poona and Nasik, where there are cantonment committees and town committees working side bys ide, local option is to be settled by a joint vote and made applicable for the whole area, I will then have no objection to local option. "

Witness :—" May I be permitted to add something ? I think the opinion is generally held that the Provincial Government cannot do anything with regard to foreign liquor, at any rate without consulting the Government of India. That was my idea. I have now carefully read the Government of India Act, and I find that the whole of Excise has been made a provincial subject and has also been transferred to the responsible half of the Government. While the Central Government will be perfectly justified in levying customs duties, I think they cannot interfere with the power vested in the provincial Government of licensing the sale and purchase of liquor."

The President :—" Have you considered the point that the prohibition of the sale of foreign liquor will affect the customs revenue of the Government of India ? *A.* If the Bombay Government can open a number of liquor shops and thus extend the trade in liquor, they must have the power to curtail the sale also."

The Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" The Government of India have refused to allow a bill to be introduced in the Madras Council on the ground that it will interfere with their customs duties. *A.* The giving of license, I believe, is an administrative matter. If sale can be extended, it can also be contracted."

Witness :— " Then I would further point out that the excise receipts have been increased tenfold within the last 50 years. In 1906 the Government of India did not lay down any new policy. The policy laid down there had been affirmed as long back as 1838, but in spite of their resolution consumption has gone up by leaps and bounds.

" Further I would point out that the policy of Government as actually practised is calculated to encourage the import of foreign liquors. The rationing system has increased the price of country liquor, and, as this rationing is not extended to foreign liquor, people take to the latter. So, foreign liquor should also be rationed. Moreover, foreign liquor should be put on the 'on' sale system throughout, and people who want to drink should be prepared to let the public see them going to drink. All restrictions placed on country liquor should apply to foreign liquor as well."

No. 65.

REPLIES OF MR. N. N. ANKLESARIA, Bar.-at-Law, PRESIDENT, ANKLESHWAR MUNICIPALITY.

*Answer to Question 1.*—I am a Barrister-at-Law, having a practice of 16 years; have been observing the effects of drink ever since my college days; have had opportunities of studying the question in India, London, and Paris. I am myself not a *total* abstainer.

*Answer to Question 2.*—(*a*) I think the Excise policy of Government to be misconceived as regards the principle on which it has been alleged to have been based, and the means employed to carry it out.

(*b*) The results have been disappointing. Far from having put an effective check on intemperance it appears to have encouraged it.

*Answer to Question 3.*—I would advocate its total overhauling.

*Answer to Question 4.*—I would favour total prohibition of all fermented drinks which come petent medical authorities pronounce to be injurious as the aim and object of all friends of humanity and consequently of Government. However, in the present state of public opinion in India, I do not think total prohibition to be feasible. My reasons for advocating total prohibition are :—

(1) that drink is an unmitigated evil and

(2) that reasoned self-denial in connection with it is almost impossible for the vast majority of people. The example of the United States of America, etc., should suggest the necessary steps to be taken for gradually carrying out the policy.

*Answer to Question 5.*—(*a*) The same argument can be urged with as great, if not greater effect, in connection with other evils, *e.g.*, adultery, etc.

(*b*) Considering things practically, the force of this argument is negligible, moreover the smaller evil which may be theoretically possible may be submitted to in order to avoid the far greater evil.

(*c*) In my opinion this is simply a bogey which requires no serious consideration and is open to the same remarks as (*b*). Similar arguments were advanced against prohibition of *Satti* and scriptures were quoted in the United States of America against prohibition of drink.

(*d*) A larger preventive establishment may be kept from the fines levied from the culprits, and services of Prevention Societies may be availed of to detect and punish offenders.

(*e*) The probability must be faced. In my opinion it is perfectly possible to effectively counter the tendency.

*Answer to Question 6.*—From what I have read on the subject I believe the argument is perfectly valid.

*Answer to Question 7.*—Prohibition by an Act of the Legislature appears to me to be the only effective means for achieving the object aimed at. The process however must be gradual and this will be greatly facilitated if Government takes upon itself to educate public opinion through its schools and Colleges, by discouraging drink and encouraging abstinence amongst its employees, and by helping voluntary societies for carrying out the necessary propaganda financially and otherwise.

*Answer to Question 8.*—Total prohibition of all liquors should be the ultimate goal. The beginning should be however made by immediately enacting total prohibition of distilled liquors or at least the restriction of their strength to not more than 60 U. P. I would prohibit fermented liquors and fermented toddy but not immediately. Use of unfermented toddy is in my opinion unobjectionable.

*Answer to Question 9.*—Absolute prohibition throughout the country, though highly desirable, being, in my opinion, not feasible in the present state of public opinion, I would suggest that the principle of local option, with the limitations mentioned in answer to question 8, should be introduced.

*Answer to Question 10.*—(*a*), (*e*), (*f*), (*g*), (*h*), (*i*), (*j*). These will be helpful.

(*b*), (*c*) and (*d*). I consider this to be of very doubtful efficacy, (*c*) and (*d*) will lead to increased immoderation.

(*k*). This will considerably lessen the sense of shame which drink in this country entails.

*Answer to Question 11.*—Yes, examples of Scotland, United States of America and other countries where the policy has been worked will furnish useful suggestions.

*Answer to Question 12.*—No, the local bodies, being not yet representative, are not likely to use their powers properly.

*Answer to Question 13.*—No, not to my knowledge. On the contrary, cases have been in which they have positively misled the authorities. A responsible and impartial officer like the Collector should be given a free hand in the matter of the number and location of shops in the areas under his control.

*Answer to Question 14.*—I am convinced that both questions must be answered in the affirmative.

*Answer to Question 15.*—I would suggest increased taxation on luxuries less deleterious than liquors, *e.g.*, tobacco, etc. I would also advocate retrenchment by decreasing the salaries of highly paid Government servants and military expenditure, and reducing the establishments of Government offices.

*Answer to Question 16.*—No.

*Answer to Question 17.*—To my knowledge the custom is mostly prevalent among the working classes.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. Anklesaria replied to the President:—"The most serious hindrance to the inauguration of a policy of prohibition would, in my opinion, lie in the fact that the executive to whom you entrust the working of it would be most unsympathetic. Secondly, I do not think public opinion, that is those people who at present drink, are sufficiently advanced to see the advantages of prohibition. Government have settled, it seems from the Resolution quoted, that they rely a lot on excise for revenue, and therefore the executive officers will be unsympathetic.

"If Government make it a rule that those in their service who are found drunk will be under some sort of disadvantage as regards promotion, etc., it will be making a small beginning by showing that Government is on the side of abstinence.

"I would not advocate Government supplying harmless drinks, like tea and coffee, along with strong drinks in the liquor shops, because those who would go there for the purpose of drinking coffee or tea might be tempted to drink liquor.

"For purposes of propaganda, Government should help temperance societies. Government should declare that their policy henceforward is the total extinction of drink. The Collectors of districts might preside at temperance meetings and whenever they get the occasion say that they are in favour of prohibition.

"Total prohibition should be the goal, but a beginning may be made by enacting the total prohibition of all distilled liquors and strong liquors like whisky and gin, except in cases where it is required under medical advice, in all areas where 'local option' has been availed of. As regards those who are in the habit of drinking, it will create discontent, but that ought to be faced by Government.

"The system of having a register of those who are now given to drinking and supplying them liquor by means of coupons may be tried to start with. The new-comers, unless they are from outside India, should not be allowed any concession. It will create temptations for illicit distillation, but it has got to be faced.

"If you look at the map of this Presidency, the evil of smuggling from Indian States will be found to be negligible. There would be a certain amount of it on the borders, but that is a very small thing compared to the greater evil you try to prevent. I do not think that the little smuggling that would exist (taking things practically) should deter Government from indicating their policy.

"As I said, you must immediately enact in all areas where 'local option' has been availed of the total prohibition of all distilled liquors like gin and whisky, and gradually restrict their strength. If it works all right, and does not create an insurmountable amount of discontent, you go on with the wines and fermented liquors. In no case would I advocate the prohibition of unfermented toddy.

"As regards the percentage of people that should vote before a shop is removed, that depends on the castes, the creeds and the inhabitants of the place. In a Parsi quarter like Udvada you will require a large majority. I would leave the thing to be done by an independent representative committee to be appointed by Government, and not to any Government officials.

"I have some experience of advisory committees; and I have been looking after their working. Even if the advisory committees are made elective and given more powers, I do not think they will work better. The Collector, on the other hand, is a very impartial officer, and once you ask him to see that the location of a shop must be such as to be conducive to the restriction of drink, he will faithfully and impartially carry out your wishes.

".I say that the policy of Government has encouraged intemperance, because Government do not look down upon drink as an evil; they actually farm out the shops instead of setting their face against the evil. That must have a serious influence on their employees and on those who care for Government opinion. I can imagine an Indian Prince prohibiting any man who drinks attending his court; but people do not think much evil in drinking, because opinion against it is not encouraged by Government.

"I do not agree that there has been a decrease in consumption, because I know that people have taken to cheap European liquors, and I fear the evil is on the increase."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" As regards the decrease of shops, it has actually led to more immoderation than before. In Ankleshwar there were formerly two shops, one being situated at Diva, a mile from Ankleshwar. So long as that shop existed, you rarely found people drunk lying on the road between Ankleshwar and Diva ; after the abolition of the Diva shop this is now a daily occurrence.

" The Collectors have got so many duties to attend to that they have to be specially asked to carry out the policy of Government, and then they will do it.

" In a certain place, the advisory committee consisted of three members, one of whom had very considerable interest in the liquor shop, and so long as he was on the committee, in the teeth of the protests of the population he advocated the retention of the shop at the same place. About four years ago, he lost his interest in the shop and straightway got the committee to write to the Collector to remove it to another locality. A year after the same man got the shop again, and he got the committee to say again that that place was all right. It speaks volumes for the committee.

" Preventive societies of the nature of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals may be started. Government should aid them by grants.

" Prohibition may be applied to the Parsis in the same way as to other communities. With regard to Europeans, I would not make any distinction as regards the law."

To Dr. Patil :—" Liquor is not required for religious purposes among Parsis.

" I am quite aware that mutton and other preparations are sold in liquor shops. It takes the sting off the liquor by eating a little ; it does more harm to drink liquor on an empty stomach. Meat is generally cooked at home, and people do not go to a liquor shop for eating meat. But coffee and tea as a counter-attraction are, in my opinion, of doubtful efficacy.

" If there is adulteration of unfermented toddy, it should be stopped. It is very hard to get unfermented toddy except in the early hours of the morning. There is also the difficulty that the pots used contain some ferment, and that is a practical difficulty.

" Just as people in Indian States have no restrictions as regards the carrying of arms, there may be no check on illicit distillation there, but that will not do much harm to us. That is a bogey.

" I am not a medical man, and cannot say anything about the age below which people should not be served drink ; but certainly young children should not be allowed to drink."

No. 66.

REPLIES OF THE Rev. Dr. ENOK HEDBERG, D. LITT., OF DHANORA, NANDURBAR TALUKA (WEST KHANDESH).

1. I am a minister of the State Church of Sweden and a missionary of the Swedish Alliance Mission. My present station is Dhanora, a large Bhil village in Nandurbar Taluka of West Khandesh.

My active interest in temperance work dates from January 1890. During the nearly 33 years that have passed since that time, I have had ample, and sometimes even unique, opportunities to study the drink question at different times and in many countries, especially in Sweden, the United States of America and India.

In Sweden I have travelled in practically every county and have then been able to study the result of temperance as well as of intemperance. For some time I have been engaged as temperance lecturer.

From 1910 to 1911 I was pastor in charge of a home for alcoholists. In 1919-1920 I was pastor of a Swedish parish and had as such to issue certificates to persons for getting liquor *contra-books* according to the Bratt system for the regulation and restriction of intoxicating drink.

In 1918 and 1919 I travelled extensively in the United States of America visiting no less than between 20 and 30 States. At that time America had both dry and wet States, and it was thus possible to compare between them.

To India I came the first time, 1900. I was stationed in Saugor District of the Central Provinces, when I was later transferred to Chhindwara District to work among the Gonds. To Khandesh I came in the spring of 1912. My work here has been mostly among the Bhils.

2. Theoretically I think it is a wrong policy for any Government to interfere with people's habits of eating and drinking. It is the sacred birthright of every human being to be free from all impediment—except such as are self-imposed for the benefit of himself, others or both.

Practically, however, we all know that this is an ideal which has not yet been reached in any country. And we have certainly still a long way to travel before that goal is reached. Till then interference has to be made, whether we like it or not. And this is not the least case with the question of strong drink.

When a person or a community is so addicted to alcoholic drink that the health of that person or community or the safety of others is endangered Government has not only a right but is bound in duty to interfere. And so the respective Governments of all the Indian Provinces have done *vis a vis* the habit of drink, firstly, by prohibiting private distillation, making it a monopolized State business and, secondly, by gradually reducing the number of liquor-shops and increasing the price, thereby making it less accessible and thus minimizing the temptation to drink.

Such a policy has undoubtedly something to show on its credit page if we think of such backward people, for instance, as the Santhals, Kols, Gonds or the Bhils of which latter tribe there are a considerable number in this Presidency. It will for a time reduce the consumption of intoxicating drink, but it is at the best a palliative and must therefore be of a temporary character. A prolongation of such a policy will spell disaster.

As to the practical result of the Government excise policy, I think, it has to be admitted that in many cases it has temporarily at least diminished, though not effectively checked, intemperance. One example from among the Bhils here in West Khandesh. When I came here in 1912, the *daru* shops in the Bhil tracts were more numerous and less far between than they have been the last eight years. And the result of the reduction of the number of shops is, if not a great, still an obvious improvement. At that time one met drunken Bhils everywhere and at all times. One meets them still, but by far not so often or so many.

It is true that illicit distillation exists. But so it did before to the same extent at least. Formerly, and that is not so long ago, distillation was practised by every Bhil family. In some village the whole population had formed itself into a distillation company, each member being by common interest or a sacred oath bound to do all in his or her power to protect the business from being detected by the Government sepoy. This system is still, I believe, practised in some out-of-the-way jungle villages. But it is less in vogue than it used to be.

A raid by the excise officer with his police force on a suspected village with detection, loss of property, court-cases, fines and imprisonment have now-a-days, temporarily at least, a great checking influence on intemperance.

Last year such a raid was—on account of information supplied by a missionary to the Excise Collector—made on a big Bhil village. The Collector's booty was large—no less than 18 distillers being caught and brought to book. The result among the Bhils was, however, still greater. The whole population of the village formed itself into a kind of temperance society with most rigid regulations. Any one of them who was found to use any kind of

intoxicating drink should be liable to a fine of Rs. 15 payable to the village *panch*, *plus* Rs. 5 to be paid as a reward to the person who reported him or her. If any one was caught distilling, the fine was Rs. 50 and 10, respectively.

One year has passed since then. Trespasses may have occurred. An habitual drunkard is not easily cured as long as facilities to get liquor are at hand. But by most of them the pledge has honestly been kept. A remarkable change for the better has been manifested not only in that village but in many other as a result of the raid and its consequences.

Family feasts can now be held without drink, tea being used instead of brandy. Only a few years ago this was considered an impossibility.

It may be noted that these people were all non-Christians and that they were not in the least influenced by any one from the mission station. Purposely, the missionary did not even visit the village when this was going on and for a long time after. And to this day none of them is seemingly aware that *padri sahib* was instrumental in catching them.

My reply to the question under this number has been rather long. The reason for this is that I want to do justice to the Government excise policy, giving it credit for what has been achieved and at the same time give some insight into the condition among the Bhils with regard to their use of strong drink.

3. As already hinted the present excise policy should, in my opinion, be abrogated. It has fulfilled its object and is now antiquated and unfeasible. An altogether new policy should be inaugurated. The aim of that policy must be not to control or restrict but to free the people altogether from intoxicating drink. The reason for this will be given in the following paragraph.

4. Yes, I am absolutely in favour of total prohibition. My reasons are chiefly these.

(*1*) The Indian people cannot afford to drink any longer. They are too poor and too backward to allow themselves a luxury that is a constant drain on their wealth as well as on their health and strength.

One of the principal causes of the deplorable state in which the Bhils at present are and have been for generations is drunkenness. This is a palpable illustration of whither an excessive use of strong drink leads. A so-called moderate use of alcohol is less destructive. It may even be true, as some authorities state, that, taken in moderation, liquor is not injurious. It is none the less a drain on the purse. And it means that people given even to moderate drink impoverish themselves, thereby making them less fit for the economic struggle in the world, a struggle which is getting more and more intense every day. In that struggle between the nations there is no country on earth that is in a greater need of all its strength than India of which this Presidency forms an integral part.

(*2*) It is the only way to get the people temperate as a whole. A moderate use of alcohol may not only be harmless. It may even be supposed to do some good. It helps the poor and down trodden people to forget their misery for a while and make them joyful. It is thus a means to lighten their burden and illumine their otherwise dark and gloomy life. Let us for the sake of argument admit this. Still it must be done away with for the simple reason that a large per cent. of the people who drink are not able, when getting opportunity, to do so in moderation. They become more and more intemperate drinkers and often fallen drunkards. And now-a-days nobody will be bold enough to deny that an intemperate use of alcohol is injurious to body and soul, that it spoils health and intellect and leads to misery, degradation and often total ruin, not only of the drinker himself but of his poor family and progeny as well.

It thus happens that what should be or is supposed to be a means of help is one of the most down-dragging things in the world. This we have opportunity to see every day in this district, especially in the western talukas where the population stands on a low level. Racial causes may to a certain extent account for this. But the main two causes of their degradation, intellectually, economically and morally, are malaria and intoxicating drink.

The prevalence of malaria is decreasing year by year as the country is opened up. But as long as the drinking habit is going on there is little hope of a growing and lasting improvement. And this habit will not be effectively checked as long as liquor-shops are allowed to exist, as long as dealing in intoxicating drink is a legal business. Even the Mahomedans are addicted to drink. And the people of Navapur Taluka are, I believe, together with the inhabitants of Akrani, the greatest drinkers in the Bombay Presidency.

Not only in Khandesh but all over the country there are certain classes who will never be temperate as long as they can get liquor to drink. Such people are of little or no use to the nation as a whole or to the State. More or less they are, without question rather a great drain on the people's resources. In order to save them from the drink course and thus convert them to useful and productive members of the community, total prohibition must be applied. There is no other way by which the goal will ever be reached.

In some parts of the Presidency it will, perhaps, be a hard job to carry out prohibition. Still, I believe, it both possible and practical.

(*3*) It is in line with the teaching and tenets of Hinduism as well as Islam and in agreement with the spirit of the Bible.

The steps to be taken for carrying out total prohibition are :—

(*i*) Education.

(*ii*) Local option.

(*iii*) Legislation.

(*i*) Government should consider it to be their duty to teach the people that intoxicating drink is a poison which is certainly injurious to the human system when not taken in moderation, that it is more healthy not to use it at all, that the drinking habit is impoverishing and degrading *a.s.f.* Facilities for teaching temperance should be given and enforced in all the educational institutions from the second standard in vernacular schools to the Universities.

To be a total abstainer should be a condition *siné qua non* for all teachers in Government schools.

Posters, urging people to be temperate, *i.e.*, to abstain from all use of alcohol, except for medical purposes when ordered by a doctor, should be placed on railway stations and all other public places all over the Presidency.

Temperance literature should be prepared and distributed among the people in the same way as tracts about hook-worm and malaria.

(*ii*) I do not think it would be advisable to inforce total prohibition at once simply by legislation. It might then prove to be a fiasco or, if not precisely that, it will obstruct and delay the triumph of temperance. It is seldom, if ever, wise to legislate in advance of public opinion. And the public opinion of this Presidency is not yet fully known though the tendency certainly seems to point towards prohibition. Where the public opinion stands could, however, be ascertained by a general referendum carried through by Government. But this ought not to be done. The less the Government act as *ma-bap* for the people, the better. The drink problem should mainly be solved by the people with the support of but not by Government.

In order to enable them to do so they should be given the right of local option. Every man and woman from the age of 18 years should, if possible, get opportunity to exercise this right.

If not less than 70 per cent. of those who come to the poll vote for total prohibition in their respective talukas or districts, it should be inforced by Government.

(*iii*) When 80 per cent. of all the districts in the Presidency have voted for total prohibition and thus got dry it should, by legislation, be extended to cover the whole of the Presidency.

*Note.*—For carrying through this great reform a period of five years should be fixed, 20 per cent. of the districts being given the right of local option each year from 1923-1924. In this way the Presidency would get dry in 1929, if the people vote for it which, I believe, they will. It goes without saying that from the temperance point of view most advanced districts should be the first to get the right of local option.

Such a procedure as has been outlined here would, I believe, be the speediest, surest and most effective way to get rid of the liquor traffic and create a temperate population. Of course, it could be done by legislation, but it would take longer time and be less effective because the people would then look at it as Government's business. But if they themselves were allowed to have a word in the matter, to decide if the liquor traffic should be tolerated or not, it would be quite different. They would then feel bound to assist in carrying out what they themselves have decided should be done, when enforced by Government.

Again and again I have noticed the value of allowing the people to decide for themselves questions that more or less concern their community. It may not be intelligently done and sometimes it is only *pro forma*. Still it is a tremendous force when it comes to the execution of the scheme voted on by them. Indians are a much more democratic people than is commonly supposed by the westerners.

5. (*a*) *Illicit distillation.*—This will, of course, go on for many years after the prohibition law is applied. But this is nothing new. It is going on every day under the present system. It might increase in some tracts and among certain classes of the people under the new policy. But Government will certainly find means to deal with such cases. In one way it will be easier then to deal with them than it is now. Under the present system it is often impossible to know if *daru* found with a person is brought from a licenced liquor-shop or it is a product of illicit distillation, and if one meets a drunken person it might be impossible to ascertain from where he has got his intoxication. But when all such drink is altogether prohibited in the whole country, when a drunken person or a person who in any way deals with or keeps in his house any kind of intoxicating drink is liable to punishment, we stand on much firmer ground.

(*b*) *Danger from Indian States, Portuguese territory and other British districts.*—The new legislatures have in *every* province demonstrated their desire for modification of the existing excise policy. Nay, more than that. In nearly all Legislative Councils resolutions in favour of reduction, with prohibition as the ultimate goal, have been passed. And behind the opinion expressed in these resolutions a powerful public opinion no doubt exists. It has forcibly, perhaps too forcibly sometimes, been demonstrated by the picketing of liquor-shops in every district of India.

This tells us plainly enough that if Indians all over the continent are allowed to take this matter in their own hands total prohibition will soon be carried out in every district and province of British India.

As to the Indian States Government have already in some cases taken over the excise policy. This is, for instance, the case with the Indian States of Khandesh Agency. And though the promise given to the chiefs when this was done that the balance of the excise revenue should be used for the benefit of the respective States has not, I fear, been kept, still the chiefs have without murmuring put up with the Government policy. This tells me that if the British territory is going dry, the Indian chiefs will certainly introduce total prohibition in their respective States, so much the more as a number of them are well educated and good rulers.

The Portuguese Indian territory might be a harder case. But is it conceivable that, when the whole British Indian Empire has gone dry, the small French and Portuguese possessions will remain wet? To me this seems impossible. But should it be so, still it would not be impossible for a Government, backed by 300 million Indians, determined to stamp out intoxicating drink to find suitable means for dealing with such a case.

(*c*) *Liquor in the service of religion.*—I suppose the Excise Committee in this paragraph is alluding to the place *daru* has in religious and semi-religious rites, etc., of such half-animistic tribes, as for instance, the Bhils.

It is true that this people have been and are still in the habit of using country liquor, distilled from the flowers of the mahua-tree, for the *puja* or worship of their gods and godlings as well as at their family festivals. But it is not obligatory for them any longer, if it in theory ever has been so, to use *daru* either in *puja* rites or at family feasts. When *daru* is not at hand they prepare a wet offering by soaking bark or leaves of the mahua-tree in water. This water is then offered to the gods who are said to be as satisfied with that as with real *daru*. At family feasts tea is sometimes drunk instead of *daru* now-a-days. Nor is it any longer absolutely necessary that the maternal nurse should be rewarded by a bottle of brandy for her service at the birth of a child. Such old habits begin to disappear under the impact of civilisation.

Knowing this, I do not think there is any danger of discontent among the Bhils if total prohibition is enforced. I have had conversation with leading Bhils on this question, and they have all told me that there is not the slightest ground for fear of discontent if the *daru* shops are going to be closed and all use of alcohol prohibited by Government.

If this is true concerning the Bhils, it will certainly obtain in other less numerous half animistic tribes in the Presidency. Besides this, total prohibition should not, as I have said before, be enforced on the people from without, but by the help of the people from within. The danger of eventual discontent will thereby be averted altogether.

(*d*) *Preventive establishment.*—It would not be necessary to maintain a special preventive establishment to enforce the law. It should be entrusted to the Police Department. In some districts or talukas it might be necessary to increase the force to enable it effectively to cope with illicit distillation, smuggling, sale, etc. But in most districts the ordinary police force ought to be able to do so without any increase in number.

The greatest difficulty will be to prevent the levying of illegal exactions on the part of the police. Here a real danger is at hand. But it is nothing new. Illegal exactions are not seldom levied by the servants of that department in other cases and bribes taken at the present time. The only difference will be that the temptations to do so will multiply.

The remedy against this evil is to raise the educational and moral standard of the sub-officers and their subordinates from the very bottom. A step in the right direction to do so would be to be more careful in enrolling candidates. No one should be accepted without a certificate to the effect that he bears a good character and is not addicted to drink or other intoxicants—

(*1*) from the headman of the religious community he belongs to in his village or town.

(*2*) from the village *panch* of the village where he lives.

(*3*) Besides this, no candidate who has not passed *at least* the third standard in his vernacular ought to be enrolled in the police.

If such rules were laid down and acted upon, young men of a better type than at present is the case would certainly be attracted by and drawn to the police service. By and by its efficiency would thus be increased so that it will be able effectively to deal with all kinds of law breaking.

(*e*) *The danger from other intoxicants.*—That some people, especially those who already are inveterate drunkards, will take to other intoxicants is not only probable but certain. But when these drunkards by and by die out and a new generation appears on the stage, this danger will gradually disappear. It will prove to be a passing phase only. The same will happen with all other forms of violations of the prohibitive law. Some violators will, perhaps, always be found as is the case *vis a vis* other laws. But the possibility of this cannot be allowed to stand as a permanent hindrance to a sound and progressive legislation.

6. *The influence of prohibition.*—The benefit and blessing of prohibition will be apparent even in the first generation. But as time rolls on and the law gets more effective, the benefit will increase abundantly from generation to generation, bringing forth a stronger and healthier people.

When travelling in Kansas, U.S.A., in the autumn of 1918 I visited an orphanage which was maintained by the Swedish Lutheran Church of America. The buildings were very large but the inmates were few. This perplexed me a bit so I asked the manager or house-father about it. He then told me that the orphanage was built for 60 children. And it was some years ago overfull. But then we got prohibition in this State, he said, and the result of this was that we afterwards hardly ever got a new orphan or destitute child. By and by, the number of the children has thus decreased by about 60 per cent. And it looks as if this establishment would not be needed in the future. Kansas was a dry State. From Kansas I went to Illinois. In that State too I visited an orphanage or children's home belonging to the same church. It was a big institution. But it was more than overfull with orphans and destitute children. And still the manager complained that he was not by far able to receive all needy children for which a refuge was sought in the home. Illinois was a wet State.

I never saw more clearly illustrated the curse of the liquor traffic and the blessing of prohibition.

The only way that leads to a complete cessation of consumption of intoxicating drink is a prohibition law. But, as already stated, this should not be thrown on the people from without by legislation only. It must come from within. That is to say that it should be enacted by the people themselves.

8. The principle of prohibition ought to be applied to all kinds of liquor that holds more than 2 per cent. alcohol, whatever its name may be—brandy, whisky, beer, wine and so forth. If any sort of intoxicating drink is allowed, the end aimed at—a temperate population—will never be reached.

9. The controlling and restrictive system has in all countries where it has more or less been applied proved to be a failure.

An alcoholist is not cured by getting gradually reduced rations of alcoholic drink. If he ever is to be cured he must instantly be cut lose from its use altogether, and for ever. In this respect there is no difference between a community and an individual. No nation has yet as a nation become temperate or sober by the governmental control or restriction of intoxicating drink.

The most ingenious controlling and restrictive system that was ever invented or applied in any country is the so-called Bratt system. It has been in force in Sweden for about a decennium.

At first it looked as if it would be possible by these means to reduce the consumption of intoxicating drink. But it soon became evident that its application was a regrettable mistake. It led to illicit distillation and sale and smuggling, bribery and other evils.

Illicit distillation has practically been unknown in Sweden since the middle of last century. In the last decade it, however, came into practice again and that on a rather extensive scale.

The smuggling traffic of intoxicants has become a great menace, especially on the east coast where the new-born southern Baltic States are trying to import hepes of liquor.

Illicit liquor sale has increased at least tenfold, nay, more than hundredfold.

No person in Sweden can buy liquor in the lincensed shops without having a *contra-book.* This he gets first when he produces a certificate from the parish pastor and the president of the *komun* in which he resides to the effect that he is a respectable person and not a drunkard. Each person with a *contra-book* is entitled to get up to two litres a month but not more. This is, however, not considered to be enough for a good number of people. And so they are trying to buy from those who do not consume their two litres. As exorbitant prices are offered the temptation is too great for a large number. For notorious drunkards the liquor-shops are supposed to be altogether closed. But still they manage somehow to get what they want from those for which they are open, or a drunkard can get his beloved intoxicants in the wet restaurants if he orders it with food, which is sold cheaper in wet restaurants than in dry ones.

The result of the introduction of the Bratt system in Sweden has been a means not to reduce but to increase the number of consumers of alcoholic drink. The number of alcoholists is increasing day by day. To get a " spiritmotbok " (liquor *contra-book*) is being more and more considered as a kind of a certificate that one is a respectable person. In a country which has less than six million inhabitants not less than over one million are provided with *contra-books.* And still it is not given to any under 18 years of age.

The Bratt system has been a means to increase drunkenness and lower the moral of the Swedish people. About this there is no doubt. During my last visit to Sweden in 1919 and 1920 I had many opportunities in different parts of the country to see and hear this, I am sorry to say.

That is the system which has been held up as an ideal pattern for the world by the much renowned periodical the *Round Table* and the English as well as the Anglo-Indian anti-prohibitive press.

Space and time do not allow me to enlarge any further on the subject. I must therefore hasten to close this paragraph. Enough has certainly been said to show that even the best restrictive methods do not serve their purpose. A system which has been a means to blunt and lower the moral sense and increase the drinking habit of the Swedes will not be a blessing to any country.

A restrictive system which has been a complete failure in one of the most highly civilized country in Europe will certainly not prove to be a success in a less advanced country of Asia. One need not be a seer to prophesy that its result in this country will be even worse than in Sweden, if it were ever introduced. Even with a superficial knowledge of India it is possible to foretell that.

10. It has already been stated that the goal of the Government policy ought to be and must be not the control but the cessation of all consumption of alcoholic drink and the only road that leads to that goal is prohibition. It has also been said that the decision should in this respect be laid in the hands of the people.

It will, as we have seen, take some time before this can be entirely carried out in the whole of the Presidency. Meanwhile, some of the means suggested in this paragraph might, if applied, have some checking influence on intemperance and ought therefore to be brought into operation.

Rationing of shops, increasing the prices or reducing the strength of liquor will, however, I fear, have very little effect in checking the evil. The same must be said too of the suggestion to regulate or prohibit certain kinds of license.

The reduction of the number of shops, days and hours for sale and the regulation of the location of the shops will certainly have some effect. And these means should be put into operation, the sooner the better.

No liquor-shop should be tolerated in a village situated on or near any public or much frequented road of whatever description or close to a market-place or near a railway station or any other public places. The best would be not to allow any *daru* shop except in taluka and district towns.

On bazar days, holidays, festivals and when fairs or *yatras* are going on the liquor-shop of the respective towns, villages or cities should be closed altogether. On other days they should not be open before ten in the morning or after four in the afternoon.

The importation and sale of foreign liquor, whatever name it may have, should be absolutely prohibited.

Under no circumstances should any kind of intoxicants be sold to minors, *viz.*, persons under the age of 18 or to notorious drinkers.

Prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops will prove futile. Restriction might do better but, I fear, even that will lead to abuse. It will be an easy matter to find somebody who for a pice or two is willing to serve as a second hand behind the back of the shopkeeper.

And as long as the liquor-dealer must see that he gets an income, large enough for him and his family to exist on, it is natural that he wants to sell as much as possible.

The policy of subsidising recognized Temperance Associations will of course do good. But a still better, and for Government the more worthy, policy is to take the temperance education and propaganda in its own hand, as suggested in paragraph 4.

To collect revenue from the traffic of drink and then use a part of that revenue for combating that very traffic is an absurdity. It is an attempt to drive out the devil with Belsebool. In the long run such a method is doomed to failure. It is even impossible to look at such a policy as a sincere attempt to stamp out the evil.

As long as distillation and sale of intoxicants is considered as an honest regular State business, from which Government draws a large income, all that is done by the State for checking intemperance will show little or no result. It is a bad policy, which naturally tends to blunt the better feelings of the people and thus must lead to degeneration, disgrace and moral bankruptcy. But still more. It also endangers the position of Government for which it invites contempt. The more the national revival in all its aspects penetrates and spreads among the people, the more this will be the case.

11. In paragraph 4 I have already expressed my opinion on the principle of local option. It should be introduced at once if the law permits of doing so. If not, steps to change the law to that effect should promptly be taken.

The area of each unit ought to be the district as a whole. No municipality or taluka should be allowed to form a unit for itself. Still if one taluka or town or village by the necessary majority votes for prohibition, the rest of the district must abide by that. It should have no right to force intoxicants on any community in any place.

The instruments by which local option should be carried out are the respective district local boards and taluka local boards. The village *panch* in the villages and the municipalities in towns and cities should place at their disposal the assistance needed; communities of religious bodies too.

12. Local bodies such as district and local boards and municipalities should be invested with he power not only of determining the location and number of liquor-shops in their respective areas but of doing away with them altogether as soon as the people vote for it. But in no circumstance should a local body be responsible for raising any part of the revenue which would more or less be reduced because it has exercised its power of restriction or extinction of the consumption of intoxicants. By this, however, it is not meant that local bodies should not feel themselves bound to do anything for the sake of raising revenue. They ought to do all in their power to procure the necessary means to meet the expenses for public service, reduced by the State.

It is only the principle that Government is justified in living on the drink traffic that must go. But this principle would be upheld if a local body should be so to say fined because it succeeded in reducing or stamping out the evil of drink. None with a keen sense of justice can sanction such a principle.

13. Of the work of the Advisory Committee I have not had sufficient first-hand knowledge to form an independent opinion and am consequently not able to make any suggestion in whatever direction at this time.

14. The evil of drink is in India, as elsewhere, responsible for a great deal of crime and misery. I have had many and painful opportunities to see this not least among the Bhils.

I know of well-to-do Bhil farmers who have been compelled to sell their oxen and agricultural implements, because they were addicted to drink.

I have seen Bhil farmer's fields revert to waste land and how they then had to be taken from them, because they were addicted to drink.

I have seen Bhils go down to an untimely grave, because they were addicted to drink.

I have seen well gifted intelligent Bhils being reduced to intellectual wrecks, because they were addicted to drink.

I know of Bhils who have taken the wives of their neighbours thereby causing family dissension, quarrel, bloodshed and impoverishment, because they were drunk.

I know of Bhils who have caused fighting, brawl, bloodshed and even murder, because they were drunk.

I know of Bhils who have ill-treated poor women as witches, being encouraged to do so because they were drunk.

The use of intoxicating drink is always and everywhere a curse when not taken in moderation. And a large per cent. of the people who is not able to do that exist in all countries where it is available. This is so evident that it is hard to realize how it ever can be questioned.

15. It has already been stated that total prohibition should, in my opinion, be introduced gradually, *viz.*, over one-fifth of the Presidency each year within a period of five years. Thus, if the excise revenue yields three crores a year, new sources for a yearly income of 60 lakhs must be found for a quinquennium. This sum could, however, probably be reduced to 50 lakhs, as it would be possible to save money by the gradual abolition of the Excise Department. To keep that establishment does not seem to be necessary after the prohibition law has been enforced. The Police Department will take charge of the work of suppression of illicit distillation, etc. As a rule the police has not much to do and this can be undertaken by it without strengthening the force.

If, however, the strengthening of the police force or some extra establishment would be required for coping with the new situation, still this need not entail extra expenses. The fines levied on offenders or violators of the prohibition law should be fixed so high that the cost of maintaining that law could be defrayed thereby.

Other duties of the Excise Department might be handed over to the Revenue Department. Though its burden already is heavy its strength will allow it to take up that much work without being overloaded so long as this is necessary.

We will now see if new sources of income can be discovered and if it is possible to add new taxation to the existing list of taxes.

(*i*) The present Government policy regarding education ought to be so modified or altered that the community that benefits by a certain educational establishment is made partly responsible for its maintenance. As things yet stand in this country it is hardly just that the upkeep of the Government village schools are wholly paid for by the State. It would be quite different if we had compulsory education and schools in every village. But we do not have that in India. And I do not think it can effectually be introduced all over the country for many a year yet. This be, however, as it may. As long as it is not the case a wrong is done to those communities that are without schools. A non-school village has to pay for the maintenance of the schools in the school-villages.

It seems to me that 50 per cent. of what it costs to keep a school in a village should be paid by the respective villagers themselves. With regard to the agriculturists the school-tax could be levied in proportion to and collected with the *jama* or assessment. None in a school-village, except the altogether land and propertyless people should, however, be exempted from paying his or her quota for the upkeep of the school.

This is, I believe, a possible and practical reform. It might be a wise policy to introduce it gradually *vis a vis* the already existing schools. And it might be necessary at least in some tracts of the Presidency to finance new schools wholly for a certain period. But it cannot be questioned that the reform lies within the range of practical politics. Carried out, it would enable Government to double the number of schools without any or at least with very little expenses. The savings by retrenchment in other departments could then be available for other needs. And there is reason for belief that, as a result of the reform, the interest in education would increase among the people.

(*ii*) I am not prepared to give any suggestion in what way the public should be made to contribute something to the upkeep of the medical work carried on by Government for the public welfare. But it seems to me that something could be done in that way. The people are ready to give large sums to quacks for imaginary services and useless, if not injurious, medicine. Why should they not then pay Government for service rendered in this respect ? I think if they had to do so, the estimation of the Government medical work would be higher in the public opinion than it is at present.

Why courts of justice should not be self-supporting is a puzzle to a layman who never as yet has availed himself of their service.

(*iii*) It is not without a bit of hesitation that the increase of the assessment or land revenue is suggested. Most of the farmers are poor indeed. Still I believe the limit of taxation has not yet been reached with regard to them.

There is, however, among others, one thing that stands seriously in the way for an increase in the land revenue. And it is that a farmer's fields are scattered over a vast area. If a cultivator is in possession of ten fields not even two of them might be connected with each other. You will perhaps find them situated in ten different places and in as many directions from his home.

It is not necessary to point out what a great loss is implied in such an arrangement. If this could be changed so that the farmer got all his fields in one tract it would save him much labour and expense. And it would then be possible for the State to substantially increase the assessment without detriment to him. And this *can* be done if the matter is earnestly taken up and put before the cultivators in a right manner and carried out wisely. I am not unaware of the conservatism of the Indian peasantry. It will no doubt here and there try to put insurmountable obstacles in the way of such a reform. But notwithstanding this, there is hope for the possibility of the realization of such a reform. By experience I know that many farmers are quite willing to exchange their fields with their fellow-farmers if they see that it would be of mutual benefit to them. But hitherto Government has done less than nothing to encourage such an exchange. In this respect a change of policy ought to take place. India cannot any longer afford to allow things to stand as they are *vis a vis* this question. How the whole problem should be solved may not be clear yet. But solved it can be and must be.

When this reform is carried out, the land revenue could be increased by, say, 16 per cent. or more. The taxation ought, however, to be progressive. A person with less than 15 acres of land can hardly pay more than he does at present.

(*iv*) The grazing-fee has been doubled this year. Still I do not think the top is reached yet. An owner of buffaloes, cows and horses can afford to pay As. 8 a piece. And a grazing-fee of As. 12 or Re. 1 per pair for bullocks does not seem to be an excessive tax.

(*v*) It is hard to understand why 50 per cent. at least of the salt and income taxes should not go to the Provincial revenue. But if this is not possible, it is certainly possible to levy a Provincial income tax to be collected together with the Imperial one. This income tax should be progressive and include incomes from Rs. 600 a year, beginning with a tax of, say, half a per cent. and increasing it to 3 per cent. In many European countries, where living is at least not cheaper, the dividing line between taxpayers and non-taxpayers used to go still deeper than proposed here.

Right-thinking persons in India will not grumble over such a tax especially when they come to know that they got so high a value for it—a temperate and prosperous population. To give only one example by way of illustration. The missionaries of a certain Swedish society are not liable to pay income-tax because their annual income is only Rs. 1,500 per annum *per capita*. But they would gladly contribute at least 1 per cent. of that small income to the Provincial revenue if they knew it to be necessary for the stamping out of the drink evil in India. And I do not believe patriotic Indians will lag behind foreigners when it comes to a sacrifice for the welfare of their beloved motherland.

(*vi*) As new objects for taxation, motor vehicles, carriages, and carts and sewing machines, are suggested.

In democratic and free America, *viz.*, the United States of America, even pianos are in some States considered taxable. This seems to me to be wrong. If anything should be exempted from taxes it is books and musical instruments. But I cannot see why a tax on a motor car should not be imposed in addition to the registration fee. An owner of a car ought to be able to pay an annual tax of about 1 per cent. of the price of his car. That would yield about Rs. 30 for a Ford and Rs. 80 for a Maxwell *a.s.f.*

A carriage-owner could pay two or three rupees per carriage in a year and a cart-owner Re. 1, an owner of a sewing-machine Rs. 2 *a.s.f.* Such small taxes would not be felt very much by the people, but would none the less substantially increase the revenue. And the capacity of the tax-payers will grow considerably the more they got saved from the evils of intoxicating drink.

These are only a few suggestions. My time does not allow me to enlarge further on the subject. It is not even necessary. More than sufficient has been said to show that if only the policy of total prohibition is once courageously faced, accepted and applied by Government, sources of income, large enough to yield what is needed for the financing of the administration of the country, will be found.

In conclusion I feel obliged to thank the Excise Committee for the opportunity given me to examine the questionnaire and reply to the questions therein. My earnest prayer and hope is that the Government of this Presidency may from 1923 so direct its excise policy and administration as to attain total prohibition of the use of alcoholic and intoxicating liquors, except for medicinal purposes, within five years.

I further hope and pray that the respective Governments of all Indian Provinces may do the same.

The British Government of India has from the social point of view in so many ways done immense good to the people of this vast continent. To mention two instances only, it has put a stop to infanticide and *sati*. What would be more fitting for that Government than to take the lead in saving India from one of her greatest evils, the curse of intoxicating drink. It would be the most worthy termination of one, on the whole just, benevolent and large-hearted rule over India's teeming millions, before it leaves the stage and hands over the reins of Government to the national Government which, in a not distant future, is to take the place of the present one, when India according to the Reform Bill of 1917, gains dominion status within the British Empire.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

The Rev. Dr. HEDBERG replied to the President :—" I have no personal experience of the results of prohibition in America beyond what I have learnt from newspapers and books. I have only stated the difference between a so-called dry and a wet state before the introduction of prohibition throughout the States. I myself believe it is going to be a success. Of course there is conflicting evidence, some in favour of it and some against it, but I believe there is exaggeration as regards illicit distillation.

" I am not in favour of registering persons who want to drink till total prohibition is introduced and issuing coupons to them.

" If the majority in a place is in favour of prohibition, and the minority is not it will be fair to force the opinion of the majority on the minority, if the minority is small. If it is only 30 per cent. they must submit to the wish of the majority. In America it was as much as 50 per cent.

" In taking a referendum, I would give a vote to all adult males and females.

" I have had talks with many Indians but the details of the views which I have placed before the committee are mostly my own. My experience is chiefly with the Bhils. They are the greatest drinkers in the Bombay Presidency. It is not possible to check them and therefore drinking in their case should be prohibited altogether. If they are given local option, I am sure they will vote for prohibition. In order to make a beginning, we should take first those places where consumption is the smallest, and then go on to places like Khandesh. In the case of the Bhils, I do not think legislation will be of any use. If you come to an agreement with them, they will stick to it, but it is impossible to force them to do anything.

" In my opinion, Government ought to take in hand the propaganda work. Government have done what they could have done under their present policy. There should be a declaration of policy by Government that it is for prohibition in five or ten years.

" Those people who use intoxicants moderately should give it up in order to help those who cannot drink moderately.

" In order to check consumption, if the shops were managed by Government employees, it may do some good for a time, as they will not try to sell as much as possible, but in the long run it will not work in the right direction; but illicit distillation is likely to go on. Selling liquor in sealed bottles will not tend to check consumption."

To Mr. Madon :—" The Bratt system has not worked towards decrease in the consumption of liquor in Sweden, because those who want to drink more will get their supply from those who

do not want to, by paying high prices for it, and if they want more, they will take it by smuggling which is going on there enormously mostly as a result of the restrictive systems in operations. The Bratt system is supposed to be the best controlling system in the world and it is still followed in Sweden because it is a great source of income to the Government."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol.—"There was a referendum about it, but it was 900,000 for and 930,000 against."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" If a district votes for prohibition, prohibition must be enforced there and should be continued from year to year. There should be no voting taken a second time. If a district does not vote for prohibition, a second voting must be taken, but Government should determine the period that might be allowed between the first and the second voting."

The Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" Would you not suggest that the proper procedure should be that any district that wanted a vote on the subject should present a petition signed by a certain number of the people of the district asking that a vote should be taken, and then a vote should be taken ? *A.* What you propose might be a better way. When Government decides for prohibition, it is then in their hands to decide."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"I do not know how America has tackled the problem of the deficit brought about by prohibition. Sweden has not yet gone dry and there is no such problem there. Illicit distillation was on the whole going on in America in only those States which had gone dry recently. In those States that were dry for a number of years, there is practically no illicit distillation."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" The Bhils have been considered to be animists. I think it is wrong to consider them to be animists. They observe certain animistic rites for which country liquors are required, but there are some villages in which they have left those practices and even become teetotallers and do not drink at all. These villagers do propaganda among the Bhil villages and they try to make them pucca Hindus. They themselves do not drink. I know one Bhil village, for instance, where there is scarcely one drinker. They are teetotallers all of them and have been so for the last ten years.

" A school was started thirty years ago in a certain village. They got a fine school-master, a pucca Hindu, and he succeeded in making them pucca Hindus : they are now more Hindus than Brahmins, and they are exerting a great influence on the neighbouring villages for temperance.

The influence from the Mission stations has worked and is working for temperance and their influence is strongly felt."

No. 67.

REPLIES OF DR. P. R. GHOGREY, REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER, L. C. P. & S. (DHULIA CITY).

I have great pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your letter with the accompanying list of questions on several points on the Excise Policy of the Government.

Before entering into the subject proper, I wish to draw your kind attention to the fact that owing to lack of time, I was not in a position to make detailed inquiries in order to enable me to answer each question referred to in your memorandum. But, however, I am trying my best to give my opinion by suggesting two broad points.

I am a medical practitioner and my occupation is such as brings me more directly in contact with the drunkard. I have testified to the multiplication of injuries caused by accident and violence due to the effect of alcohol, as well as to the greater difficulty of recovery from operation or disease experienced by the drunkard in comparison with the sober.

I. I am in favour of total prohibition of all kinds of alcohols, which should be effected at least within the period of three years by means of rapid progressive steps in the direction. The period of three years is specially laid down so as to allow the Government to make the necessary arrangement to make up the deficit in the revenue, caused by total prohibition.

*The reasons for total prohibition.*

1. The habit of moderate use of alcohol leads a man to excess in short course of time, as many people have no control over the temptation to drink and thus become slaves to the drinking with the result that they ultimately ruin lives of their own and the members of their family.

2. Drinking tells both on health and wealth of the public.

3. Evils of intemperance :—

(*a*) Accidents and accidental deaths.

(*b*) Source of crime. If total prohibition is brought into force, magisterial and police work will be reduced to some extent and thus some magisterial posts can be done away with and thus save a part of expenditure.

(*c*) Premature deaths due to diseases from indulgence in alcohol. The majority of the premature deaths is amongst those that are addicted to the habit from early boyhood.

II. If the Government does not approve of the above suggestion, which is essential in the interest of the public, I wish to lay down another measure which is effectual in checking the excess of alcohol to a great extent. But this measure is put forth on one condition that the Government promises *compulsory primary education both for boys and girls*, which is most essential in the interest of backward classes, on whom really the brunt of the revenue lies.

*Scheme.*

III. The scheme, I put forth, may be surprising at a glance, but on due consideration will be found most effective in bringing about temperance. The scheme, though new in India, is prevalent in foreign countries where they have done good service to the public. The scheme runs as follows :—

(*i*) There should be prescribed age limit for the customers of liquor. In my humble opinion it should not be below 25 years. Liquor should not be sold to minors and women. Heavy fines should be inflicted on persons below the age of 25 years.

(*ii*) There should be such law that on no account liquor should be taken out of the premises of the liquor shop, notwithstanding the fact for the use of medical purposes as can be obtained in better form from dispensaries, Government and private.

(*iii*) This should be applicable simultaneously to all village shops.

(*iv*) I emphasize the question 10 (*b*) regarding the increase in price of liquor so that the liquor quantity consumed will be less owing to the exorbitant rates and at the same time the Government will not be looser from the financial point of view.

(*v*) The most important feature amongst the above 4 is that there should be a definite limit of quantity of liquor consumed by each man in a year. The limit should not exceed 20 bottles. To effect this one note book should be issued to each man addicted to drinking on payment of rupee one, which betters financial condition. The entries regarding consumption of liquor should be made by liquor licensee. Total of consumption should be brought down at each term of drink.

(*vi*) The illicit distillation should be very seriously dealt with.

(*vii*) To check entries and to see that no drop of liquor is taken out of the shop premises, one excise peon should be posted at each shop so that the Government can easily detect the offenders who should be severely dealt with.

(*viii*) The location of shops should be decided by the Excise Advisory Committee consisting of all non-official members, and care should be taken that the shop is placed outside the town in order to avoid temptation.

(*ix*) The number of shops should be reduced by 50 per cent.

(*x*) The shops should be open for 6 hours, *i.e.*, from 2 to 8 p.m. They should be closed on all Hindu holidays at the discretion of the Advisory Committee.

(*xi*) The right of preaching at the same time should not be disturbed.

(*xii*) Retail sale of foreign liquor should be prohibited by law.

(*xiii*) Stupefying drugs of all kinds, including opium, bhang, ganja and hemp ought to be prohibited for consumption except for medical purposes as prescribed by doctors.

IV. Lastly, I suggest the following sources of finance in order to enable Government to make up the deficit in the revenue, caused by the above mentioned policy :—

(*a*) Reduction in posts of higher salaries.

(*b*) Appointments of Honorary Ministers in place of highly paid Ministers.

(*c*) Abolition of certain civil posts :—

(1) Commissioners.

(2) District Deputy Collectors whose magisterial work should be assigned to the Sub-Judges.

(3) Sub-Divisional Forest Officers.

(4) Chief Conservators.

(5) Superintending Engineer.

(6) Police Inspectors.

(*d*) 20 per cent. reduction in salaries of officers from Rs. 200 upwards. This rate of reduction, if deemed necessary, may be increased in cases of salaries above Rs. 500.

(*e*) Taxation on shops where tobacco and cigarettes are sold.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Dr. Ghogrey to the President :—" I am Secretary of the Backward Classes Association which works for temperance. I am a Maratha by caste. The evil of drink has spread considerably in my community ; it has practically ruined the community. I am in favour of total prohibition. Prohibition should be introduced immediately in areas where there are no facilities for illicit distillation, but in areas where there are such facilities, it may be introduced gradually. Government need not mind any opposition among the drinking classes to the introduction of prohibition. If they are told that prohibition is introduced in order to better their condition of life, they would be convinced.

" I do not mind if Government have some control over the work of temperance associations and they are willing to subsidise them. If Government are not prepared to do anything, I would advocate the imposition of fines by village *panches* on drunkards. I admit that we should take the people along with us before we legislate.

" As regards the advisory committees, I would have them composed of non-officials elected by the people. I will not allow the Collector to interfere with a decision of the majority of the committee. If any minority suffers, they can appeal to the Council. Habitual drunkards should be left to walk even 30 or 40 miles to get their drink, if the result of gradual reduction in the number of shops is to make the shops few and far between.

" I would extend the ration registration system also to new-comers from foreign countries."

To Mr. Madon :—" Everybody who wants a drink (country or foreign) should go to the shop and take it there."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I would introduce the system of rationing liquor for each individual and also introduce the system of reduction of shops simultaneously. Without the help of Government the system of fines by caste *panchayats* will not succeed.

" A salary of Rs. 30 to the peon, whom I suggest should be placed at the door of each liquor shop, will be sufficient, as his work will be controlled by supervising officers."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I am prepared to include tea among the list of things to be taxed, mentioned in paragraph IV (*e*) of my written statement."

*Q.* You advocate that care should be taken that the shop is placed outside the town in order to avoid temptation. In view of the fact that you advocate caste *panchayats* to deal with drunkards, don't you think that a shop should be located just in the bazar where every visitor will be liable to be seen and will therefore feel ashamed to enter the shop ? *A.* I will not say that the shop should be just near the market. It may be in an open place capable of being seen by the public.

To Dr. Patil :—" I am prepared to say that shops should be closed on all holidays and not only on Hindu holidays on bazar and pay days."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" I belong to a class in which there is a good deal of drinking. If my community were asked to vote whether they would require a liquor shop in their neighbourhood or not, I think they would vote in a majority for not having a liquor shop in the neighbourhood.

" The work of collecting votes should be entrusted to a board consisting of some respectable gentlemen from the voting community and not purely of Government officers."

## No. 68.

### Replies (in Gujarati) of Mr. DHANJISHA MERWANJI HATHIKHANAWALA of Surat.

I, the undersigned Dhanjisha Merwanji Hathikhanawala, beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th June 1922, and in compliance with the desire expressed therein, I submit my statement as under for the Excise Committee, in reply to the various questions on Excise, according to the best of my abilities.

My competency to answer the questions lies in the fact that Surat is rightly noted from olden times for the manufacture of high class liquor from *mhowra* and as a large consumer of liquor and toddy, and that my ancestors were, for generations, the manufacturing industrialists of such high class of liquor. After the grant of monopoly for the manufacture of liquor in Surat, liquor of such superior quality ceased to be available to the people.

I am aged 51, and have been practising in native medicine for the last 25 years. From my observations as an humble native doctor and from my personal experience as a drinker of liquor, I can weigh the merits and demerits of *mhowra* liquor as well as I can point out the advantages and disadvantages arising from the policy pursued by Government in connection with *mhowra* liquor and toddy, and can make some suggestions as to what should be done and what should not be done.

The Excise policy of Government enunciated by them in Finance Department no. 5001, dated the 7th September 1905, is good. But it can prove to be popular only if certain changes are effected therein in order that it may be in keeping with the declared intentions of Government.

To prohibit drink to the temperate is deemed by Government to be outside the province of their duty. On the contrary, they hold it to be essential to supply the needs of such persons. I approve of this policy of Government. But it is a question who should be regarded as the temperate. Even the educated commit errors. It is no wonder then if the lower illiterate and ignorant working classes commit the error of transgressing the limits of temperance. I am, therefore, humbly of opinion that as they are like children and the Government are in the position of parents to them, those classes should not be regarded as temperate. Parents abstain absolutely from giving to their children in their interest certain eatables. In like manner Government should prohibit them drink or should arrange matters in such a way that liquor may not be obtainable to them daily.

According to the Indian medical science, to a man who has taken his food, who eats fatty and starchy substances, who is in the habit of taking liquor daily, or who is born in the family of one habituated to drink and who is fatty and phlegmatic, liquor taken in moderate quantity is as effective as *rasayan** or in other words it gives him health, strength and alacrity.

On the contrary, it produces numerous diseases to a man who is hungry, thirsty, excited or who is an eater of food containing no greasy or starchy substance. Accordingly, manual labourers, after they have left work, should have rest both to their body and mind. Excitement of passions caused by drink does harm to the physique of a manual labourer just as excessive exercise does.

I, therefore, suggest that in the interest of the health of the illiterate working classes it is necessary that liquor should be made unobtainable to them daily. Arrangements may, however, be made for the supply to them of liquor in moderate quantities on each *Amas* (the last day of each Hindu month) when labourers and artisans in India observe a holiday and do not work, and further when there are consecutive public holidays, on one of these days only. Such arrangements will meet their temperate requirements.

Of course, respectable doctors and vaidyas and hakims should be given the liberty of giving liquor to these classes, if it is found necessary at the time of illness.

It is useless to ask them to give up drink voluntarily after facilities are afforded to them to indulge in drink and they are habituated to it. It is also impossible that they would give up drink of their own accord after they have received education, because education is powerless before habit. Of course, education can produce effect on the future generation. A beginning should, therefore, be made at an early date to impart such education in schools.

It is futile to expect that the labour classes would give up their habit of drinking, if liquor is made dear because, on account of the habit they have contracted, they press their employers for money to meet the cost of liquor, strike work and secure additional wages which they spend primarily on liquor, and thereby remain in the same poor condition to which they are habituated. The consequence is that their health is impaired and indigenous industries suffer. In my humble opinion the only remedy to wean them from the evil habit of drink is to make liquor unobtainable to them daily.

The policy of Government to supply the needs of the temperate drinkers is on all fours with the teachings of the medical science referred to by me above. Those who are not manual

*A medical preparation from metals and minerals.

labourers and are family men and those who have acquired some education and possess property and other qualifications should, therefore, be regarded as temperate drinkers and taverns should be open for them. Thus the people should be divided into two classes temperate and intemperate—and separate arrangements should be made for the sale of liquor to them.

No contract for the sale of liquor should ever be given, but the shop-keeper should be a responsible Government servant; nor a contract for the manufacture of liquor should be given, but Government themselves should undertake the manufacture of liquor. If that is done, then only will the evils and abuses resulting from the contract system cease.

Shops provided for the temperate drinkers should not sell liquor by draught, nor should they allow drinking within their precincts and a limit should be prescribed for the supply of one bottle in the minimum and six bottles in the maximum at a time to a member of a family. If more bottles are needed, they should only be supplied to those who have obtained a special permission therefor. Certain education, occupation or property qualifications should be prescribed for the family of the purchaser classed 'temperate,' and the Government vendor should supply liquor to persons with such qualifications after registering their names and addresses. The adoption of this system of sale to temperate drinkers will prevent high class Hindus and Musalmans from purchasing liquor out of shame, and will at the same time afford the necessary facility to the temperate drinkers.

The cost of living in the case of temperate drinkers of the middle class has become so high that to make liquor dear after providing them with facilities to indulge in drink and habituating them to it is an act of injustice and tantamounts to oppression. According to the aforesaid medical science and my experience I say that liquor is beneficial to the health of the temperate. Hence if that class of drinkers is to be supplied with liquor, the charge of more than one rupee and a quarter per bottle will be a hardship to that class of drinkers. The rich amongst the temperate class of drinkers use largely foreign (European in the original) liquor. They can pay higher price. Government should, therefore, allow the importation of brandy, whisky and other drinks. But it should be allowed after the authorities have satisfied themselves that the brandy and whisky imported are genuine. And the Customs duty levied on them should be so high that the users of *mhowra* spirit will not be induced to buy them and the Government would get good revenue out of the pockets of the rich buyers. It is a kindness on the part of Government that they declare their intention of supplying high class of liquor of harmless kind. Taking into consideration that kindness I would mention what the public opinion is in connection therewith. According to the medical science *mhowras* are regarded as very nutritive in India. The *mhowra* liquor is not regarded harmful as that prepared from molasses and other heating substances. Hence the *mhowra* liquor generally is liked by the public. The Government should therefore kindly supply the *mhowra* liquor only. If Government supply distilled liquor of 40° or 60° U. P. and strong liquor reduced to 40° or 60° U. P. by mixing water with it, and at the same time profess that the policy of Government is to supply high class spirits, then I must say with regret that the practice and professions of Government get at a tangent and then they become subject to criticism, because it is apparent from Indian medical science and the experiences of a common user of drink, that in the case of cold, the administration of unsweetened *mhowra* liquor of at least 25° U. P. only is efficacious, but watery country spirit of 40° or 60° U. P. does not suit in such a case, and it is on that account that many times the public purchase strong foreign liquor and drink it. Government are strongly criticised as they pursue the policy of supplying freely strong foreign liquor and watery *mhowra* liquor which is not liked by the public.

The liquor of 25° U. P. should, therefore, be supplied to the temperate drinkers in order to satisfy the public opinion. It should be made from *mhowra*, should be double-distilled and unsweetened and its price should not exceed one rupee and a quarter per bottle. Those Indians who demand mild liquor should be supplied distilled liquor of 40° or 50° U. P. but not one made mild by an admixture of water and its price should be in proportion to that fixed for the liquor of 25° U. P. Strong liquor is used largely in medical treatment. *Mhowra* liquor of 15° U. P. should, therefore, be sold to respectable doctors and vaidyas and hakims at a reasonable price.

Government wish to supply mild spirits in the interest of the public. I beg to suggest in connection therewith from my experience that, instead of making liquor mild by mixing water, they should make liquor distilled with rose flowers and oranges as was done formerly in Bombay and Surat and supply to the public two such kinds of fragrant, sweet spirits of 25° U. P., in addition to double-distilled liquor at the price of the latter. Such action will demonstrate not only the good intentions of Government to supply mild spirits, but the public will willingly buy them. By my knowledge of Indian medical science and personal experience I say that the distillation of *mhowra* with orange and rose flowers makes a good liquor and it attains sufficient mildness by mixing sugar with it. It is the higher class of people that constitute the temperate drinkers. If they are educated not to be intemperate and to use the minimum quantity of liquor, it will be reasonable to hope that that class will eventually give up drinking liquor.

My humble opinion is that the reduction in the number of shops in cities does not reduce the number of drinkers, because the evil result of it is that labourers, after they have left work in

the evening, run to the shop in large numbers. Then the shopkeeper gives many times short measures to retail purchasers and when they complain, their complaints go unheeded on account of the rush of buyers. The shop-keeper thereby profits at the cost of the public and gets richer to enable him to bribe the subordinate officials. Taking into consideration all these facts, I beg to suggest that a responsible Government servant should be employed for the sale of liquor to the labouring classes, a limit should be prescribed for its supply to each man on *Amas* and other holidays when the sale is open for them and drinking within the precincts of shops should be prohibited because both the good and the bad assembling at the shop, are induced to indulge in excess ot drink in rivalry and thus mischief is wrought. Liquor required by them in connection with their social customs should of course be supplied subject to certain restrictions.

By thus providing separate arrangements for the supply of liquor to the temperate half-educated classes and to the intemperate ignorant classes, the latter will be protected from the drink evil, the fears entertained of evil consequences resulting from total prohibition will be obviated, there will be less likelihood of the deterioration of public morality, the questions of the location of shops and local option will also be solved and the kind-hearted advocates of temperance, being relieved of a part of their work in this connection, will be able to devote much of their time to other temperance work.

Concessions and restrictions prescribed for the sale of country spirits should also be prescribed for the sale of foreign liquors, *i.e.*, sale of foreign liquors by draught should be prohibited, they should be unobtainable to the labouring and artisan classes daily, the sellers of these liquors should be Government servants and as in the case of country spirits, the minimum and maximum limits of one and six bottles respectively should be prescribed for the supply of the same to a member of the family possessing the requisite qualifications after his name is registered.

In short the sum and substance of what I want to say is this that everything has its merits and demerits. In like manner liquor has also its two sides. The advantage and disadvantage of it depend upon the manner in which it is made use of. The public consist of two classes, the one making the right use and the other making the wrong use of it. Accordingly, the arrangements for the sale of liquor without evil results should also be two. It is not wise (lit. safe) to apply the same rule in the case of all classes of people.

Liquor was formerly carried from place to place in wooden casks. Now it sometimes happens that it is carried in vessels made of metal. This is highly undesirable as there is every chance of the liquor so carried becoming poisoned. The Committee should therefore recommend that liquor should invariably be carried in wooden casks and not in metal ones.

What are usually called refreshment rooms are really speaking bars for the sale of liquor. Hardly any eatables are sold there and these should not be allowed to exist because they hold out temptation to people to sit there and drink at any hour of the day.

It was formerly regarded as injurious to health to add water to country liquor because it gives rise to nervous diseases. Our benign Government, in the past, were extremely careful about this and the slightest mixture of water to liquor, if detected, was regarded as criminal and visited with heavy punishments. Even liquor farms were cancelled, if the farmer was caught adding water to liquor.

### *Toddy.*

Toddy is the sweetest and most nutritive amongst intoxicating substances. But if inquiry is made, a vast difference will be found between the toddy which the dealers themselves drink and which they sell. The reason of it is threefold, the greed of the dealer, the eagerness of officials to raise the greatest possible revenue and the helpless condition of the dealer which compels him to raise so much income from his business as would enable him to cover the cost of its conduct and earn his livelihood. Consequently, toddy dealers conduct their business at the cost of the owners of the date trees and of the public by tapping the trees to the extent that they (trees) would sicken or die and by mixing water in case the quantity produced by tapping is not sufficient to pay the Government dues.

In order to improve this position the tax should not be levied per date tree tapped but according to the quantity of toddy tapped from each tree or the tax levied on each tree should be reasonable. Further, in order to induce the public to take to toddy drinking in preference to liquor the price for toddy should not exceed six pice per bottle in a city like Surat.

Sour toddy is harmful. Toddy, if brought down from trees at 2 o'clock in the noon and sold from 4 to 9 p. m. Standard Time, will not get sour and will prevent the labourers from getting drunk during his working hours.

Liquor or toddy drinking within the shop premises by purchasers should be prohibited. The arrangements for the supply of the intoxicants should be made with the object that they may be taken at the time of eating.

There are many questions to be answered for the Excise Committee. But I have attempted to answer those questions which it was possible for me to answer satisfactorily and I believe that the able Government officials have intelligence enough to put into effect the suggestions made by me and raise the deficit accruing in revenue in other ways.

It is very difficult to calculate the average yield of toddy per tree, as this depends on the nature of the soil, the art of the toddy tapper, the capacity of the tree and the way in which the tree is watered while it is made to yield toddy. For this reason it is not proper to levy a uniform tax on each tree. The result of levying the tax on trees is that too much toddy is drawn from them to their detriment ; many of them require a long rest before toddy can again be drawn from them, and a good many others die. This improper mode of taxation and the present policy of Government in regard to toddy are like striking an axe at the root of the tree which yields a handsome revenue to Government. I therefore earnestly suggest to the Committee to draw the attention of Government to this short-sighted policy and give them a grave warning in time. The proper way of improving the present policy is, in my opinion, to levy the tax on the quantity of toddy actually drawn from the tree and removed to the place where it is sold. This was the procedure in vogue in Surat at first and could be reintroduced again if Government so desire.

The only way to supply fresh, unadulterated toddy to the public would be to tap the trees twice a day—once in the morning and once in the evening—to keep over a little old toddy in the pot before it is hung up the tree and to remove the pot only once in the day, say, at two o'clock in the afternoon and to send the stuff so collected to the toddy shops in time to be sold only between 4 and 9 in the evening. The evening time is the proper time for drinking toddy, either at tree-foot booths or at toddy shops, whether it is drunk for refreshment or for enjoyment at picnics. At the morning hours of the day it is not only useless for this purpose, as it gets sour, but may prove harmful to the labourer in the performance of his work.

Toddy sellers at present complain that they have to throw away at the end of the day quantities which they are usually unable to dispose of. If they manufacture vinegar out of this toddy, which they could do easily, they would be able to sell it at as profitable a rate as toddy and would suffer no loss. But the fact is, vinegar cannot be made from adulterated toddy, hence their present complaint.

Medical men know that nothing but harm results from adding sugar to toddy which has become sour, or water to pure toddy.

Moreover, the water thus added is insanitary as the adulteration has to be made guardedly and secretly ; besides, this adulteration of toddy with water, looked at from a religious point of view, is a breach of caste rules. This adulteration should be put a stop to with a strong hand. Lessening the number of shops ultimately increases the power of the seller ; in order to stimulate rivalry in the business and thereby cheapen the rates, the numbers of sellers and shops should be increased. One shop-keeper must not have more than one shop in his possession at a time.

There is a lot of trees, which, though made almost useless by drawing toddy, can yet be made to yield *nira* (sweet toddy). Only a nominal fee should be charged for drawing this *nira* from such trees so that these trees may not be left to remain idle and may be made to bring in a good revenue to Government. In Surat the adoption of this course will bring in thousands of rupees to Government and supply a large quantity of the harmless beverage to the public at a cheap rate, especially to those who on account of religious or other scruples are prevented from drinking toddy. And it is not possible for the *nira* to become toddy if it be kept for however a long time; people will never go in for this kind of drink. Toddy can be made by putting in a little old toddy to act as a ferment in the pot which is bound to the tree. No such ferment can be added to *nira*. Keepers of toddy shops complain that the taxes are so heavy that unless toddy is either adulterated or sold at short measure, the business cannot be made to pay its way. Government should, if this be true, give proper attention to such complaints and try to remove them in order to supply a wholesome stuff to the people.

The rule at present followed of allowing the shop-keepers to sell toddy at any rate they please is detrimental to the public. Government and toddy sellers do make a profit out of this rule because the people have been habituated to get a ready supply of liquor and toddy whenever they choose and whenever they can pay. They cannot now give up this old habit. Government should therefore take commiseration on drinkers and fix a reasonable maximum at which toddy and liquor can be sold. The shop-keepers, if they manage to get their licenses, being few in number, enter into a pool and charge the highest possible rates from the public. This subverts the original idea of a healthy rivalry.

It is difficult to estimate the average yield of toddy per tree, but it is still more so to prevent its adulteration and short measure while it is sold. The toddy business admits of frauds in a variety of ways and is a singular one in this respect. If the Committee find that it is impossible to check adulteration and frauds in this business by any modification of the present policy, I would suggest what I think to be the safest and easiest method of overcoming this difficulty, *namely*, that so far as the city of Surat is concerned Government should call for separate tenders for the supply of pure toddy from the fields to each shop and get the stuff sold there by their own appointed agents or paid servants, as suggested by me in the case of liquor, and prescribe by law a heavy penalty for the illicit sale or adulteration of toddy by the supplier, his servants, or the tappers in the field. It is not so difficult to detect water in toddy as it is ordinarily

understood. I am sure the Chemical Analyser to Government would be able to prescribe a simple test. A little experience is, however, enough. If the adulterated stuff is allowed to stand over for an hour or two in a glass, the watery substance will rise to the surface, the real toddy falling below it. Pure toddy will rise in effervescence as time goes, and particularly if it is allowed to remain in the sun; mixed toddy will not do so and will froth only if it is stirred or shaken.

The public who at present are unable to get pure stuff will be in a position to complain to Government against their responsible agent in the event of the toddy being impure. Care should be taken that the supplier has no monopoly and that there is healthy rivalry and that people can select the shop they choose for the kind of beverage they desire. The course that I have suggested will not only relieve the public of the burden which now falls on them in the shape of the licensees' handsome profits, but will do away with the excuse which these people bring forward that the present system of auctioning or tenders compels them to have recourse to adulteration.

In the case of districts I beg to point out that different localities produce toddy of different kinds and tastes. These, as I have already deposed, depend to some extent on the skill of the tapper and the soil and watering. It is not desirable that superior beverages of certain districts should be either stopped or mixed with inferior ones. Competition should therefore be stimulated in the different localities and the grant of licenses for tree-booths should continue as at present.

If the sale of liquor and toddy by Government be objected to on the ground that the present licensees will loose their means of livlihood, I would propose Government to give them a chance and employ them as their agents or servants on liberal commissions and salaries, at least in the beginning.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. HATHIKHANAWALA replied to the President :—" I would divide people who drink into two classes—the temperate and the intemperate. The former would include men with some education, who do not belong to the working classes and whose life and habits are such as would enable them to restrain the selves from excessive drinking and who can afford to eat richer food. The intemperate class would include the labouring classes. They will not be discontented if they are served with liquor once a month at *amavasya*, which is the day of rest. When it rains for weeks together toddy drinkers get no toddy at all and yet they do not complain. Similarly, if liquor is not provided to liquor-drinkers for some days their thirst will not reach the point of unrest. What I mean by the temperate class includes people with an independent profession and not public servants, whether civil, police, railway or military. Restriction on the temperate section of these services should only be imposed during their working hours. Drink should be supplied to the temperate class in sealed bottles in the quantities stated in my written replies. These restrictions would apply also to foreign liquor.

" It is difficult to get fresh toddy at present. In order to get more profit the licensees are tempted to adulterate it. Amongst vegeterians strong liquor in most cases is injurious, but even among them, in the case of those who take rich food, it will help the digestion and assimilation of food ; it may be allowed in their case. In my opinion liquor is helpful to the stomach of older people. The reason why I advocate the sale of 25 U.P. is that those who want it for the purpose of helping digestion and removing cold should be able to get it."

To Dr. Patil :—" I am of opinion that ginger and pepper irritate the stomach more than alcohol of the strength of 60, 40, 30, or 25 U.P. and the sweetened liquors, if taken to produce as much effect. In order to prevent adulteration and short measure, retail liquor should be sold to poor, labouring classes by responsible Government servants."

To the President :—" I am of opinion that in matters of food and drink, the majority should not be allowed to override the wishes of the minority. The poorer classes are like children who do not know their own interest, and it is the duty of Government to look after their interests. "

" The evidence of Hindu witnesses on this question of drink is mostly of people who have no personal experience in the matter, and greater weight should be given to the evidence of those who are in the habit of drinking."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Liquor should be transported in wooden casks ; if metal casks are used, it leads to the liquor being poisoned.

" So far as my experience goes, I would advocate the ' off ' sale rather than the ' on ' sale system, because a man would be much more ashamed to drink in excess at home, while at the shop, on account of bad company, he is tempted to drink to excess. I do not think if a man drinks at home it will spread the evil.

" Licensees are unable to do away with sour toddy in their shops as the toddy being already adulterated cannot be converted into vinegar. If toddy were sold by Government employees, they would be able to convert it into vinegar and get more profit out of it.

" The drinking of toddy adulterated with water and sugar would cause gout and rheumatism and would cause diarrhœa if taken in excess. "

To Dr. Patil :—" Licensees earn more than a Collector's salary by short measure. They should not be allowed to sell by any other measure than that of a pint, half pint, or a gallon in bottles."

To the President :—" Restriction in the number of shops will lead to fraud when there is a rush of customers, and will transfer the profits from the pockets of the many to that of one."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" The pots which are put on the trees for drawing toddy are filled already with water and that too which is dirty because this has to be done hurriedly and stealthily and there is no time to get pure water."

To Dr. Patil :—" There will be no inducement to the owner of the trees to exhaust them or to adulterate the toddy with dirty water, if the toddy is taxed when admitted into a shop.

" If a man takes toddy mixed with water, he will have to take a larger quantity to get sufficient intoxication. More water will thus collect in his stomach, and he will suffer from diarrhœa.

" Date trees will also yield jaggery and its manufacture, if allowed, will put them to better use. "

No. 69.

REPLIES OF SARDAR NAHARSINGJI ISHWARSINGJI, M.L.C., Thakor of Amod, PRESIDENT, DISTRICT LOCAL BOARD, BROACH.

1. I am by profession a landlord, and as such I had ample opportunities of coming in contact with the people of various communities who use alcoholic drinks. Besides, I am an Honorary First Class Magistrate in Broach District and also the President of the Broach District Local Board and Amod Taluka Local Board. I am also an M.L.C. In the discharge of my duties in these capacities I have been in a position to study this question from various aspects. At the outset, I must make it clear, that the subject is bristling with difficulties, but I am of opinion that the more difficult the problem is, the greater the necessity for the best brains of the country in trying to solve it with success.

2. Without going into the past history of the use of alcoholic drinks in India, it would be more appropriate to examine the present condition as regards the use of alcohol in India. Despite the fact that the use of alcohol is strictly prohibited by the Hindu and Mahomedan religions of India, there are not a few among the followers of these religions who are devotees of alcohol. But the most outstanding fact is that its use is confined to the illiterate and ignorant and that too mostly of the labouring classes. It is true that a very few persons of the literate and higher classes also use alcohol, but they may be left out of account for practical consideration.

It seems to me that the whole problem is considered from entirely two opposite standpoints. The Indian standpoint which is based upon religious beliefs is that the use of alcohol is an unmitigated evil and a vice and as such it does not deserve any encouragement from Government. It is argued on behalf of the protagonists of this view point that Government by issuing licenses for the sale of alcoholic drinks directly encourage the use thereof, that it is the duty of Government to discourage such a vice by all the means at their disposal. That even if a large preventive establishment had to be maintained to prevent illicit distillation it would be worth while incurring this cost. Being an unmitigated evil and a vice it is no function of Government to afford facilities even to those who use it in moderation. The other school of thought argues that alcoholic drinks by themselves are not evils. They are innocent stimulants if indulged in moderation and therefore " it is necessary to make due provision for the needs of persons who use them in moderation ". The most Government can do would be to minimise temptation and to discourage excess among those who drink.

If we were to dispassionately examine these two view points, we cannot but come to the conclusion that on the whole in doing justice to those who use alcohol in moderation, whose number is comparatively small, we have done incalculable harm to the interest of a vast majority of those who use alcohol. In this connection the peculiar circumstances of India should not be lost sight of. We know as a matter of fact that large sections of Mahomedan and Hindu population totally abstain from alcohol on account of their religious beliefs to their greatest advantage. Generally those Hindus and Mahomedans who indulge in alcoholic drinks belong to the lowest strata of society, and are illiterate. So far as my district is concerned if a census of those who use alcohol were taken it will, I think, be found that more than 70 per cent. of them are Bhils who are agricultural labourers. I can say without hesitation that their present degradation is more or less due to this habit. These people are too weak and ignorant to protect themselves. It would be absurd to talk of indulging in moderation in the case of these classes of people. The only way to save them from their present wretched plight is total prohibition. The restriction of liquor shops and the raising of liquor taxes have not been instrumental in minimising temptation or checking excess. I think I can state without the fear of contradiction that the remedies adopted under the policy laid down under the Resolution of the Government of India, F. D., No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 have not put an effective check on intemperance.

3. Prohibition to be reached by stages is the only policy which would avail in the circumstances of the case. Any palliation would be worse than useless.

4. I admit that the use of alcohol in moderation is a good stimulant to labourers and others. But we know as a matter of fact that from among those who use alcohol, the percentage of those using it in moderation is almost negligible. As already stated, the classes who generally use it are the poorest and the most ignorant. It would be too much to expect self-control from these classes. Even people of higher and literate classes fall a victim to this vice. Of course, the beginning is made with the avowed determination to indulge in this habit with moderation. But in nine cases out of ten the resolution is not kept up.

The measures of increasing the liquor taxes and decreasing the number of shops are mer palliatives. These may result in mitigating the evil to some slight extent but they would not be effective in checking intemperance.

I think prohibition to be a practical measure. But total prohibition should be gradually realized, say, in the course of the next 10 to 15 years. The shops should be curtailed every

year according to a fixed programme, the liquor taxes being simultaneously increased from year to year. The strength of liquor may also be gradually reduced.

5. My reply to the objections referred to in this paragraph is as under :—

(*a*) This is the most serious objection. It would be very difficult to wean all at once the people from the drink habit whose force is such that if a man is once enmeshed into its clutches it is extremely difficult for him to extricate himself. It is quite true that in the beginning in the absence of drink facilities such people would be strongly tempted to take to illicit distillation. But once the determination of Government to eradicate the vice at any cost is out, the cases of illicit distillation would gradually disappear. In the meanwhile even among these classes public opinion against this habit will be formed and that will go a great way in removing the evil of illicit distillation. Even at present the preventive establishment has to keep a strict watch on illicit distillation and, I believe, it has eminently succeeded in checking illicit distillation to its minimum.

(*b*) The difficulty pointed out in this sub-paragraph is not such as could not be removed. The Indian States would gradually fall in line with Government policy. The matter is of such vital importance to the welfare of the people that once a definite move is made by the Indian Government, the Indian States and the Portuguese Government would more likely than not follow the Indian Government policy of gradual prohibition.

(*c*) With the vocal public opinion in favour of the policy of gradual prohibition there is no great possibility of serious discontent if the drink is interfered with and that too by stages.

(*d*) In the beginning a large preventive establishment will be necessary to cope with illicit distillation, but when we consider the end in view, I think, the expenditure incurred in this would be more than compensated by the return in the form of better physique, greater happiness and better condition of the classes concerned. The opportunities and temptation to levy exaction on the part of the establishment even now exist. But it is purely a question of departmental efficiency and it should not be beyond the capacity of the administration to check the levy of these illegal exactions.

(*e*) There is some probability in the beginning but it would disappear in course of time.

6. The argument is very sound. I do not subscribe to the opinion that prohibition will not be effective in the present generation. It is true that it may not be effective to a desirable extent still it is sure to have a very salutary effect even in the present generation, but its good effects would be more obvious in the next generation when the evil of illicit distillation would have been reduced to a minimum.

7. My reply is in the affirmative. The goal could be reached only by prohibitive legislation.

8. My reply is in the affirmative to both the questions. Whether it is toddy or liquor, its evil effects are patent as there is alcohol in both to more or less extent.

9. In view of my above opinion which I hold no answer is necessary.

10. I have no great faith in the policy of controlling consumption. Accordingly I do not think it necessary to suggest means of controlling consumption.

11. As I have advocated gradual prohibition, I would like to put down my views as to how this is to be achieved. We may assume that Government has laid down a programme of reaching the ultimate goal of total prohibition in the course of 15 years. This period may be divided into five stages of three years each. At every one of these stages about 20 per cent. of the number of shops should be reduced in each district. The liquor taxes being simultaneously increased and the strength of liquor reduced, the result would be that some percentage of the drinkers would abstain from drink every year, the force of habit would be weakened in the case of some other, and the remaining would feel the hardships of going to longer distances, of paying higher prices, and of getting liquor of reduced strength. With this gradual preparation the people will be better prepared to face the prospect of total prohibition.

The question of local option comes in deciding what shops should be selected for reduction. If an overwhelming majority of the people of the area affected are in favour of not having a liquor shop, that shop should be reduced. The best way to exercise local option would be as under :—

When a representation for reducing a shop is received, the Mamlatdar of the Taluka should issue a public notice fixing a date, time, and place of expressing public option. At the date, time, and place so fixed all male adult members of the area should be called together and they should be asked to give their opinion. Those in favour of retaining the shop being asked to group themselves in one place and those against it in another place. If, say, 80 per cent. of those assembled vote for reducing it, it should be reduced.

12. My reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative and to the second part in the negative.

13. No. I would like to have these committees abolished altogether. In place of these committees the power of determining the number and location of shops should be vested in the taluka local boards.

14. There could hardly be any difference of opinion as regards the fact that the evil of drink contributes to an increase in crime. I think, the history of all countries bears incontestable testimony to this. The output of work is also affected. Those who are not used to this habit are more steady, reliable and industrious.

15. I have no definite recommendation to make. The sources of income should be determined by the local Government.

16. No.

17. The custom is dying out and no special measures are necessary in this connection so far as this District is concerned.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Sardar NAHARSINGJI ISHWARSINGJI replied to the President :—" I would begin by introducing local option in cities, because the largest quantity is consumed in cities and also because facilities for illicit distillation are much less in towns than in villages.

" I do not consider that total prohibition is feasible at present, because there will be great discontent among the people and also because it will tell upon the revenues of Government. When the Excise revenue will decrease, Government are likely to enhance the burden of taxation on the poor agriculturists and the landlords. I am for gradually reducing the number of shops and thus bringing about the disappearance of the drink evil, but I cannot advocate that Government should by legislation prohibit the sale and manufacture of liquor even at the end of 15 years. It would not be right to do so either. If total prohibition is introduced, people may take to other intoxicants. In order to respect the religious feelings of Hindus and Mussalmans, Government should not restrict the freedom of action of Parsis and other communities who have no religious scruples against drink. Government should gradually reduce facilities to the smallest extent possible and try to reduce consumption. I would like to modify my answer to question 7, if I state there that I am in favour of total prohibition at once. I do not consider prohibition to be a practical measure.

" I am against advisory committees, because I find that they have not done much useful work. I cannot say why they have not done useful work. It may be because they do not take sufficient interest or there may be other causes. If they are to be wholly elected or composed of a majority of elected members, then I would give a trial to them. "

To Mr. Jadhav :— " I am in favour of applying local option to groups of villages, if such groups can be got together. If the majority of 80 per cent. suggested by me for enforcing local option is found high you may reduce it if you like. I would have no objection to include women also as persons qualified to vote where local option is exercised. "

Dr. Patil :—In your written statement you have stated : " If we were to dispassionately examine these two view points, we cannot but come to the conclusion that on the whole in doing justice to those who use alcohol in moderation, whose number is comparatively small, we have done incalculable harm to the interest of a vast majority of those who use alcohol." You have also stated : " As already stated, the classes who generally use it are the poorest and the most ignorant. It would be too much to expect self-control from these classes. Even people of higher and literate classes fall a victim to this vice. " Do you not therefore think that it is the duty of Government to protect them ?—A. I do not think it to be the duty of Government. Their duty is only to reduce facilities for drink, and Government should not encourage drink. Government should do nothing more. The rest lies in the hands of the people themselves.

" Theoretically I am in favour of prohibition, but it is not a practical measure. The Mahomedan and Hindu religions prohibit drink, but still you find the drink evil in Turkey and India. In India, where there are so many castes and communities, how can Government prohibit the sale of liquor ?

" I cannot suggest any age limit for persons to whom the sale of liquor should be forbidden.

" I agree that liquor shops should be closed on holidays and market days."

No. 70.

REPLIES OF THE REV O. A. DALGREN, MISSIONARY, PIMPALNER, WEST KHANDESH.

1. My profession is that of a missionary and I have had the misfortune of living for 12 years in one of the most intemperate talukas of British India, *viz.*, Navapur, West Khandesh.

2. My opinion is (*a*) that the excise policy is most excellent as far as Government's own attitude towards the drink question is concerned but (*b*) that actual results, as it has been carried out in practice, have been most discouraging from a temperance point of view, since by the showing of statistics it can hardly be claimed that it has put an effective check on intemperance. Since 1905 drink has increased in Navapur and from statistics just to hand the quantity of liquor consumed in Bombay City in 1919-20 was 6·80 lakhs proof gallons. It rose to 8·36 lakhs proof gallons in the following year ! I believe these instances will serve as an index generally, for the whole of India.

3. My opinion is that it was not outside the Government's duty to interfere with this threatening evil, " the drink position, sufficiently grave .....to demand the close attention of all who are interested in the habits of the people. " Alcohol in moderation is like stealing in moderation. Both lead to excesses sooner or later. To improve upon this policy is to my mind out of question. The only thing that would meet the requirements of the case is to change it into one of

4. Total prohibition, because (*a*) it would strike at the root of one of India's greatest social and moral evils ; (*b*) it would discharge the moral responsibility of the Government towards the people ; (*c*) it would satisfy the best public opinion. From the point of view of financial expediency at the present time it would possibly be impractical ; but as a first instalment for making a sober and happy nation, nothing could be more practical, and the first step for carrying it out would be a firm resolve on the part of Government to reverse its excise policy and boldly face every problem arising from prohibition. Every good citizen and resident of this great land would range himself on the side of Government and give every possible assistance in stamping out a great evil.

5. (*a*) If it is morally bad to consume liquor by illicit means, is it not nearly, if not equally as bad to do so by lawful means so called ? License gives a greater facility for drinking than no-license, for it puts the ready made product before the very nose of the drinking fraternity. (*b*) Indian states and Portuguese territority would most probably voluntarily enforce prohibition, if the neighbouring British districts took the initiative ; (*c*) some of the worst drunkards would doubtless welcome the day direct temptation by the grogshop was removed. Opposition would no doubt make itself heard, but as a considerable minority that could be easily dealt with. (*d*) The preventive establishment ought to be a function of the ordinary police. As forest fires are extinguished and effectually stopped by villagers in whose proximity they occur, because they are made responsible for them, so the whole village should be made responsible for illicit distillation by any individual or set of individuals belonging to it. In some cases illegal exactions are levied even now by individuals of preventive establishments already existing. Why is this made an objection since this could only happen is isolated cases, and that by *individuals* surely not by the establishment, and effectually regulated by the ordinary functions of the law ? (*e*) Under prohibition individuals would most likely take to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs but surely not the people who under open license, however, are exposed to temptation and encouraged in intoxication.

6. I believe the argument that " prohibition, although it might not be effective in the present generation, will have a large influence on the next " is very sound indeed, for it goes without saying that very few children would acquire the drink habit under prohibition, whereas now in many instances they are regularly trained in and sometimes even forced to intemperance.

7. Prohibitive legislation could never in itself be entirely effective to attain the end of complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor, yet it would certainly be one of the strongest means that I can think of. It would cut the tree above ground ; the roots and the stump would very soon wither away by popular education, exposing to the scorching sun of public opinion the very roots of the evil.

8. Yes. Prohibit all liquors, whether distilled or fermented.

9.....

10. The means of controlling consumption set forth in this question are commendable, but unless it includes the strict adhesion to the principle of a certain percentage of yearly reduction of the total output of liquor, it can never lead to complete cessation of consumption.

11. Yes. The influential people of any given locality should be consulted before a liquor shop is opened in their locality. The new electorate, but perhaps better still, the municipal or taluka local board, should form the unit of such advisors.

12. The responsible body should have power to enforce prohibition in their locality, with the aid of the police of course, and to levy village or community fines in cases of offences mentioned under 5 (*d*). But the principle laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India referred to under question 2 that "all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated" should be recognized by Government to such an extent that wherever a responsible body could show satisfactory results, it should be exempted from liability. Under this ruling it is obvious then, that no liquor revenue should be collected where absolute prohibition was enforced and total abstinence practised.

13.....

14. Most certainly. An overwhelming percentage of crime in the Nawapur taluka is due to drink, and days off work by drunkards is a common affair. When such return to work again, they are not fit to do a day's work at any time till they are off again, much less to make up for the output of work lost!

15. Is not the question of revenue, derived from the sale of intoxicants, subordinated? If predominant as it really appears to be then, Sirs, if we can get more benefit out of the animal by drugging it, let us do so, only we must not forget that the days of our prosperity must needs be few and easy to be numbered, for we shall speedily disable the poor brute and incur a loss that can never be made good by the temporary gain. If prohibition were legalised and total abstinence practised and encouraged by men and women of influence every where, the question of revenue would take care of itself for the actual loss incurred, not only in money for pulling along the administrative cart, so heavily loaded down with intemperance and the extraordinary bills of heavy expense both private and public in connection therewith, but in manhood and vital energy as well, resulting in moral depravity, lawlessness and crime that threaten to ruin whole nations. These enormous losses that accompany the liquor traffic far outweigh the few crores of rupees now realized by Indian liquor revenue.

As this is a moral issue to which every consideration of financial gain or loss "must be absolutely subordinated" it ought to be disconnected from the question of revenue altogether.

16. Stupefying drugs of all kinds, including opium and hemp, ought to be prohibited for consumption except for medicinal purposes as prescribed by doctors.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent among the working classes to an alarming extent. To quote a statement by the Executive Health Officer, "dealing with the infantile death-rate in Bombay, which was 666 per 1,000 in 1921" and "one of the greatest evils the Bombay Presidency Infant Welfare Society has to combat is the giving of opium to children. The mothers drug them and leave them alone when they go to work," seem to indicate that this custom has a great effect upon the death-rate of children.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

The Rev. Mr. DAHLGREN replied to the President:—"I have had no experience of advisory committees and so cannot give any evidence about them. In answer to question No. 11 I say: 'The influential people of any given locality should be consulted before a liquor shop is opened in their locality.' I include merchants, school-masters and educated people among the influential classes. These people know the habits and customs of the Bhils and they also know what is best for the poorer classes, and therefore in giving effect to their desire, no harm will be done to the poorer classes. I have no objection to the matter being decided by a referendum to the whole locality.

"I think the most practical way of introducing prohibition eventually is to prepare the way by local option, in the first instance. I am not of opinion that, if a referendum were taken in Navapur, people will vote in a majority for prohibition. But in the Sakri Taluka, a taluka close by, I think a majority will be prepared to vote for abolition of shops. I would advocate the teaching of temperance in schools and by public lectures. I do not believe in picketing, because if you prevent a man from going to the liquor shop without explaining to him what the evil effects of drink are, he will think that his liberty of action is unduly interfered with.

"I do not think that it is right for Government to say—as they have said in their Resolution—that it is necessary for them to make due provision for the needs of those who drink in moderation. I would like Government to declare that they aim at reducing the consumption of liquor to the miminum extent. Such a declaration of policy will have a good effect, because a great majority of the Indian people are in favour of prohibition. Many Excise officials, I believe, will also welcome the change of policy.

"I think it would be very good to start with the rationing of liquor to persons who are already given to drink, by a system of coupons and by registering their names. When there is more than one coupon-holder, there is the possibility of one of them passing on his liquor to another, and that may be difficult to control.

"I admit that in Navapur consumption has decreased since 1913-14, but there are two reasons for this: first, liquor has been made too dear, and, second, picketing by non-co-operators. In 1917-18 the revenue was Rs. 38,000 and in 1918-19 it was increased to Rs. 1,26,000, and as a result there is a sudden drop in consumption.

" I cannot say that picketing had any permanent effect on checking consumption, but the general agitation of the question throughout the country had a good effect.

" Illicit distillation has increased in Navapur since the license fees were increased.

" Even if there may be some cases of illicit distillation on account of restriction of facilities for drink and the reduction of shops, that ought not to be taken as a ground for refusing local option. Illicit distillation can be checked by putting the raw material to some other use or the trees may be cut down. "

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" I am working among the Bhils largely. A number of these Bhils have given up drink on account of the Hindu propaganda. In some parts, propaganda is still going on. *Panchas* have been formed to try and fine persons found drinking. In some cases they keep to their determination not to drink, but in others they take to drink after some time."

H 1366—70

No. 71.

REPLIES OF RAO BAHADUR THAKORRAM KAPILRAM, LL. B., GOVERNMENT PLEADER, SURAT.

*Question* 1.—I am a Vakil by professsion. I cannot say I had any special opportunity, but I form my opinion from newspaper discussions on the subject.

*Question* 2.—(*a*) The principle enunciated is sound and I agree with it.

*Question* 2.—(*b*) There is of late a tendency to reduce the number of shops; but I cannot say there is any effectual check on intemperance.

*Question* 3.—I do not advocate any change in the policy. However I would suggest that the local attempts by Temperance Associations should be encouraged and they should be subsidized so that they may be in a position to provide substitutes in the shape of tea, coffee for weaning these people from their habits of drink.

*Question* 4.—Certainly not. It is neither a practical measure nor is it expedient that the State should adopt the measure.

*Question* 5.—Does not survive.

*Question* 6.—I do not think the consideration is without substance. If the youthful generation sees their parents and persons of their daily environment not indulging in any drink, it is quite likely that the generation may totally refuse to succumb to its attractions.

*Question* 7.—I do not think, for a vast continent like India or even a large Presidency like Bombay, total prohibition should be held up as a goal. I would like to depend upon rousing the moral consciousness of the community rather than to any coercive methods either legislative or mass movement like picketting.

*Question* 8.—I do not want legislative prohibition anywhere.

*Question* 9.—I concede the State cannot afford to be indifferent to free indulgence in drinks of all sorts, and it is the duty of the State to see that as few fall victims to habits of intemperance as possible. The State should regulate the traffic and keep as few centres of temptations as possible.

*Question* 10.—I am quite satisfied that the catalogue of suggestion is practically exhaustive. If the manufacture is gradually discouraged, it might tend to help in the achievement of the object aimed at.

*Question* 11.—I am quite in favour of local option and the sense of the locality can be ascertained by a regular referendum.

*Question* 12.—In the absence of a regular referendum, I would invest local bodies with the power of advising on the location and number of shops. I am not in favour of investing them with the power of finally determining them. The concluding part of the question seems to be based on the idea that the local bodies may not lightly determine the number of shops. This implies initial lack of confidence in their public integrity. This should be avoided. The revenue is bound to suffer in any attempt to rid the community of the evil of drink.

*Question* 13.—No. Their advice must be sought in a *bona fide* spirit and must be accepted.

*Question* 14.—Undoubtedly.

*Question* 15.—I do not look forward to extinction of the excise revenue at all.

*Question* 16.—No.

*Question* 17.—Not much in this district. It is prevalent in working classes. I am not in a position to state what effect it has on child mortality.

As Chairman of Committee of Management and sometime back as the President of the Municipality I have been getting daily returns of deaths in the City and do find that infant mortality is appalling, but I have not been able to trace it to any appreciable extent to the practice referred to in the question.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Rao Bahadur THAKORRAM KAPILRAM replied to the President—" I would not go in for total prohibition even if the country is prepared by previous propaganda, because individual liberty ought not to be invaded upon, although I grant that it is an evil and moderation in the beginning leads up to excess in the end. There would be no objection to Government declaring it as their policy that consumption of liquor should be reduced to the lowest minimum possible.

" If 70 per cent. of the people of a locality vote for the removal of a shop, it should be removed. If 70 per cent. of the villages in a taluka do not want to have liquor shops, the whole taluka may be declared dry, if it is practical, due provision being made to provide liquor to those who cannot do without it by means of coupons.

" My general impression is that intemperance is on the decline in Surat. In the Surat District many of the crimes and deaths are due to drink.

"There is no objection to Government providing counter-attractions in the shape of tea and coffee in the liquor shop. It will lead people to understand the good intentions of Government.

"Temperance associations should be subsidised by Government.

"I do not think the sacrifice of excise revenue will benefit the country; the sacrifice of opium revenue has not benefited the country. But if it has to be sacrificed, revenue will have to be raised by other methods.

"Assessment of building sites in villages, towns and cities should be available for local purposes, but if the provincial purposes require it, I would have no objection to such an assessment by Government. People are contributing largely towards the Excise revenue, and if it is sacrificed for their benefit, I do not see why they should grumble to pay in this way. The assessment will have to be adjusted in proportion to the Excise revenue which is sacrificed in each place. If only one-third excise revenue comes from rural areas, assessment of building sites in rural areas should be in proportion. Each district should make up the loss in Excise revenue.

"With regard to succession duties, the Hindu joint family system has come in the way of a proper incidence of succession duty. I do not see why they should continue to escape it. If a father dies leaving his property to two sons, and one of them dies after coming into the property, the remaining son will have to pay duty on one-third *plus* one-half. The legislature should take care to see that no invidious distinctions are made between community and community as regards the application for certificates of succession.

"If prohibition is introduced by legislation, there is the danger of smuggling from Indian States and illicit manufacture even in towns, and in the case of people who want liquor any how, no amount of danger would deter them from having recourse to illicit manufacture.

"I would not like to replace the present licensees by Government employees. These employees will be tempted to make improper gains.

"The age limit for sale of liquor to a person might be raised to 18.

"Local bodies should only have the power of advising regarding the location of liquor shops; the final decision should rest with the Collector."

To Mr. Madon.—"In a regular referendum, all adult males and females should have a vote not necessarily municipal voters. A population of 5,000 would be enough for one area in Surat."

To. Dr. Patil.—"Immoderately indulged in, drink is an evil; its use is not necessary for the purpose of building up the body. There are paper interdictions against it in all religions. Although Government have taken away the right of some people to distil liquor themselves, I do not understand why the State should interfere with people who drink in moderation. If the present policy is given up, the resulting evil would be infinitely greater than the existing evil. Prohibition is not the remedy that suggests itself to me for the present evils of drink. We have advanced considerably since the old days when State interference in private affairs was considered to be a nuisance. In matters of education you have started it, but in matters of food and drink it would be intolerable. If a man beats his wife after getting drunk, there is the Penal Code.

"The liquor shops should not be on the thoroughfares and public places. They should be closed on holidays and market days, and they should not be within easy reach of the people."

To the President:—"There is something to be said for the view that if the shops are in out-of-the-way places, people who would not ordinarily drink would go there and get drunk."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol:—"There are both country and foreign liquor shops in Surat. Liquor is more harmful than toddy; the latter does not cause much harm."

Q.—I have here a report on toddy drinking in the Malay Estate in which the Chief Secretary to Government says that toddy produces an amount of public bestial drunkenness which the Government would not tolerate round a liquor shop. Is that the case here? A.—I cannot answer because when a man is drunk it is very difficult to say whether he has taken liquor or toddy. Toddy is less likely to create disturbance than liquor. I could not say which of the two injures a man's health more rapidly.

No. 72.

REPLIES OF MR. K. B. PUROHIT, HUZUR DEPUTY COLLECTOR, WEST KHANDESH.

1. I am a Government servant, a Huzur Deputy Collector, and I have rendered 21 years' service, in all of which I have served as a Mamlatdar for 11 years and 2 years as District Deputy Collector. I had thus every opportunity of observing and forming an opinion as regards the present excise policy of Government.

2. (*a*) The excise policy as laid down in the extract from the Resolution of the Government of India (quoted) is one of indifference towards the well-being of the people. (*b*) The actual result of such a policy in practice has been the increasing vice of drinking liquor among the uneducated masses and increased revenue to Government. It has completely failed in its object and given all possible encouragement to the drinking habit of the people, who were known to be the most sober in the world.

3. The drinking of alcoholic liquors is injurious to the health and produces demoralising effect in the drinking population. All civilized Governments have either taken, or are seriously considering the question of taking, legislative measures to prevent the evil.

4. I am in favour of prohibition. The higher classes in India totally abstain from drinking. There are a few castes, who make use of liquor once or twice in a year. This limited use should be allowed as it is in accordance with established customs. The majority of the people are Hindus, Jains and Mahomedans, whose religion forbids the use of liquor altogether. Total prohibition is quite possible in India, where there was very little drinking when the country was ruled by Hindu and Jain kings. It is only the lowest classes, the depressed classes, criminal tribes, etc., who indulge freely in drinking. Prohibition by legislation is the only course left for putting a stop to the vice among these people.

5. I am in favour of partial prohibition to start with.

(*a*) The facilities of obtaining liquor by illicit means are not many and such action should be punishable as at present under the law.

(*b*) Most of the Indian States have adopted the British policy as regards abkari matters and will be ready to adopt the changes to be introduced in British districts.

(*c*) There are a few castes, which make use of liquor on certain ceremonial occasions. Attempts should be made to ascertain the probable quantity of liquor required on such occasions and arrangements made to supply it as a temporary measure.

(*d*) Penal sections in the Abkari Act go a long way in preventing illicit distillation. Preventive establishment is no doubt necessary to check illicit distillation but there is no necessity of maintaining a large establishment. The ordinary Police establishment can be trusted to deal with cases of illicit distillation also.

(*e*) Illiterate people take to drinking very easily. Other intoxicating drugs are not so alluring as liquors.

6. Prohibition in my opinion will do immense good, if not at once but in the long run. The next generation will not find it difficult to live without liquors at all.

7. The end to be aimed at is the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquors and in my opinion legislative prohibition is the only and effective means of attaining that object.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors whether distilled or fermented. I would prohibit the use of toddy or shindi as well.

9. Absolute prohibition should be attained gradually and not at once. The consumption of liquor may be reduced gradually by certain percentage deduction according to the drinking population out of the total population of a given area.

10. I am in favour of the courses suggested in (*a*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*), (*f*), (*g*), (*h*), (*i*), (*j*) and (*k*), to attain the end of total prohibition. I am against increasing the price of liquor. Liquor should not be sold to minors and women. But it should be sold to adult males, *i.e.*, who are above 18 years of age. Temperance associations should be given all possible help in their work. They need not necessarily be subsided.

11. I am in favour of introduction of the principle of local option. If three-fourths of the adult male population of certain locality is against the location of a liquor shop, it should be removed at once. The process will pave the way to the total prohibition of liquor in the end. Arrangements should be made to ascertain the public opinion of the locality once in three years by taking votes on a fixed day.

12. I am in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. But I do not like the idea that they should be held responsible to raise funds to make up the loss of revenue that will be sacrificed in doing so.

13. The existing advisory committees have done some good. If they work with zeal, a lot of good is likely to come out of them. The constitution of the committee needs much improvement.

14. The drink evil has not contributed to much increase of crime. Serious offences are not committed by drunkards, but by bad characters. Drinking is only responsible for disorderly behaviour in towns and cities. Drinking habit makes a man weak and renders him inefficient for hard work.

15. The administration has become top heavy and the first step towards economy should start with the reduction of pay of the higher appointments. The Abkari establishment entertained at present is unnecessary and should be cut down at once to a large extent. Land tax may be increased by 25 per cent. as long as the present high prices of grain continue; this will yield a revenue of one crore or more. Land owners and persons having incomes of Rs. 2,000 and above pay land revenue and income tax respectively, but those who have an annual income of less than Rs. 2,000 from *sources* other than agriculture and the labouring class do not pay any tax. They should be made to pay an amount equal to the average incidence of land tax or even more. The population of the Presidency, British Districts, is 1,92,35,219. Nearly 25 to 30 per cent. of the population do not pay any tax at all. If these persons are taxed, an amount of one crore is likely to be raised and thus it is possible to make both ends meet.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. PUROHIT replied to the President :—My views regarding retrenchment are based on general information. I cannot give any more useful suggestions.

"I am entirely against the assessment of building sites in villages. I think it will be a great hardship to tax our houses, and even then the income will not be much. It would be better to tax agricultural lands. Although a man in a village may be spending a rupee a year on drink, I am against the principle of this sort of assessment.

"I am in favour of prohibition by legislative enactment by degrees. There should be legislation as well as the education of the lower classes. I am in favour of a fiat of the legislature declaring all at once that all sale or manufacture of liquor is prohibited, and would not wait till a certain number of shops are gradually removed.

"The decrease in consumption before the rationing system in Khandesh is due to the decrease in the number of shops, but no account is taken of illicit distillation. In the Navapur Taluka 400 cases a year were being detected. On account of the increase in the price of liquor, people have taken to illicit distillation. As long as there are liquor shops authorized by Government, the people will understand that they are at liberty to drink, and when they have no means to pay for it, they will take to illicit distillation. But if by total prohibition the supply of all liquor is stopped, they would come to the conclusion that Government do not want to supply them with liquor. If Government declare that their policy is to reduce consumption of liquor to the lowest level possible and show it by action, the higher castes will not go in for illicit liquor. The lower classes like the Vanjaris and Bhils are given to manufacturing illicit liquor, and it is through these people that the higher classes get their supply, but if all the liquor shops are removed, they will stop illicit distillation.

"If a certain area declares itself in favour of the removal of a shop, its wishes should be carried out, whatever may be the wish of the executive officer, and the action of Government in this respect will impress the people that Government is not in favour of supplying liquor. Temperance reformers can get the people to vote for removing shops which they do not want. There has not been such propaganda so far in my district, where the people are not very keen on prohibition; the non-drinking classes may be in its favour. Government would be backed up by popular opinion in any measures they may adopt in this respect, and if a referendum were taken, I am sure the drinking classes would vote for the removal of liquor shops.

"If revenue officers of my standing are made to preach temperance, it will do an immense amount of good. I think it would be better to introduce prohibition after preparing the people in some such way."

To Mr. Madon :—"At one time the higher classes were not at all drinking, but now a certain percentage drink. In cities it may be 10 per cent., in towns 5 per cent., and in rural areas not so much. I would include the Pandharpeshis among the higher classes; also Brahmins and merchants.

"There is a goddess at Karla caves, and Kolis from the Konkan visit that place every year in the month of Chaitra and for certain ceremonies which they perform there they must have liquor, and we must provide for such cases."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"Government have simply laid down the excise policy, but they do not care whether it is followed or not.

"Toddy and shindi are as harmful as liquor, in my opinion as a layman. Medical opinion may be in favour of toddy, but I think the effects of drinking toddy are as bad as those of drinking liquor. I have seen many persons who are given to drinking toddy losing their health. I am of opinion that the present policy of rationing should be continued with greater vigour. I admit there are difficulties in the way, *viz.*, of people exhausting their ration within a few days and then remaining without liquor for the rest of the days. But this will help to reduce the drink evil.

"Once the people of a locality have decided to introduce prohibition, they should not have a second chance to reconsider their decision after a period of time. Only when they decide to continue sales, they should be allowed to reconsider their decision after a short period.

"I am not in favour of Government insisting on local bodies making up the loss in revenue which will follow the introduction of prohibition into their areas. I do not consider that the present land tax is too heavy. The rise in prices will enable the agriculturists to pay more land tax.

"I have served in Poona, Satara, Khandesh and Sholapur, and I do not find any statistics to prove that there is relation between serious crime and drink."

To Dr. Patil:—"If prohibition is introduced, in the beginning there will be an enormous increase in illicit distillation, but it will be easily detected and additional force will not be required to cope with the detection.

"I have no objection to allowing women to vote when a referendum is taken regarding abolition of shops in a locality."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol:—"Prevention of illicit distillation will not be as difficult as it is supposed to be by some. It will not be more difficult than at present. When Government close the liquor shops, law-abiding people will not resort to illicit distillation. There may be some trouble with the Bhils and Vanjaris, and I would suggest that the law should be put in operation against them strictly."

*Statement handed over by Mr. Purohit at his oral evidence showing the consumption of country spirit.*

| Area and its consumption of Country Liquor. | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. |
| | 1910-11. | | | 1911-12. | | | 1912-13. | | | 1913-14. | | |
| East Khandesh .. | 1,035,005 | 219,206 | 10·2 | 1,034,886 | 208,097 | 9·6 | 1.034,886 | 191,651 | 8·9 | 1,034,886 | 173,814 | 8·06 |
| West Khandesh .. | 580,154 | 197,874 | 16·4 | 580,723 | 207,409 | 17·7 | 560,723 | 181,830 | 15·03 | 580,723 | 171,090 | 14·1 |
| Jalgaon (town) .. | 16,259 | 6,698 | 19·8 | 17,867 | 7,709 | 20·7 | 17,867 | 7,241 | 19·5 | 17,867 | 5,404 | 14·5 |
| Bhusaval (town) .. | 16,363 | 12,739 | 37·4 | 18,312 | 13,414 | 35·2 | 18,312 | 12,390 | 32·5 | 18,312 | 6,351 | 16·6 |
| Pachora .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |

| Area and its consumption of Country Liquor. | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumtion of country spirit in terms of proof. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. |
| | 1914-15. | | | 1915-16. | | | 1916-17. | | | 1917-18. | | |
| East Khandesh .. | 1,034,886 | 140,982 | 6·5 | 1,034,886 | 1,18,882 | 5·5 | 1,034,886 | 161,793 | 7·5 | 1,034,886 | 1,53,640 | 7·1 |
| West Khandesh .. | 580,723 | 143,724 | 11·9 | 580,723 | 122,883 | 10·6 | 580,723 | 181,197 | 15·6 | 580,723 | 176,126 | 15·5 |
| | In the A | kranritact of West | | Khandesh. | 5,567 | .. | .. | 7,363 | .. | .. | 11,234 | .. |
| Jalgaon (town) .. | 17,867 | 7,831 | 21·04 | 17,867 | 5,361 | 14·4 | 17,867 | 5,689 | 15·3 | 17,867 | 8,058 | 21·6 |
| Bhusaval (town) .. | 18,312 | 10,764 | 28·2 | 18,312 | 7,330 | 19·2 | 18,312 | 12,058 | 31·6 | 18,312 | 12.923 | 33·9 |
| Pachora .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5,145 | 8,431 | 78·6 | 5,145 | 9,292 | 86·7 |

*Statement handed over by Mr. Purohit at his oral evidence showing the consumption of country spirit*—continued.

| Area and its consumption Country Liquor. | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | | Population. | Consumption of country spirit in terms of proof. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head o population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. | | Total gallons. | Rate per head of population. |
| | 1918-19. | | | 1919-20. | | | 1920-21. | | | 1921-22. | | | 1922-23. | | |
| East Khandesh. | 122,380 | 31,941 | 12·5 | 122,380 | 29,424 | 11·5 | 1,075,837 | 98,516 | .. | 1,075,837 | 69,386 | .. | 1,075,837 | .. | .. |
| WestKhandesh. | 42,639 | 14,842 | 16·7 | 42,639 | 15,058 | 17·5 | 641,847 | .. | .. | 641,847 | .. | .. | 6,41,847 | .. | .. |
| Jalgaon (town). | 17,867 | 6,190 | 16·6 | 17,867 | 5,661 | 15·2 | 23,710 | .. | .. | 23,710 | .. | .. | 23,710 | .. | .. |
| Bhusaval(town). | 18,312 | 10,135 | 26·6 | 18,312 | 9,768 | 25·6 | 25,557 | .. | .. | 25,557 | .. | . | 25,557 | .. | .. |
| Pachora. | 5,145 | 7,259 | 67·7 | 5,145 | 8,022 | 74·9 | 7,889 | 5,654 | 34·4 | 7,889 | 2,619 | 15·9 | 7,889 | 2,699 | 16·4 |

No. 73.

REPLIES OF MR. SHAWAKSHA H. KHASUKHAN, MEMBER, SURAT CITY EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

2. I substantially endorse the policy of Government hitherto followed which has so far borne fair results, and has worked for a larger spread of temperance and that policy should be extended.

3. No large or radical change in that policy would I recommend but action in consonance with conditions found in different places can be taken and modifications carried out gradually. For that purpose Government policy should be sufficiently elastic.

4. No. It is an impossibility.

5. I do not favour prohibition, total or partial, nor would I recommend any legislative checks. The other questions do not arise after the above expression of opinion fundamentally.

6. It is at best hypothetical ; a mere pious expression of a wish would hardly be realised.

7. No, that should not be the aim. Legislation cannot make a people or a nation dry.

8. No. Toddy should be liberally treated, apart from liquor.

9. The judicious extension of the present methods and policy.

10. I endorse the several means proposed ; their enforcement to be worked at with due regard to local conditions and not irrespectively of these and *en bloc*.

11. A beginning must be made seriously. Present notions of the people with regard to it are hazy. A skeleton scheme should be drawn up by Government and opinions invited in the first place.

12. A : Yes ; B : am not quite prepared for this though it must follow in the natural course.

13. Only in a way, or partially. Hitherto they merely register the decrees of the executive and have no determining voice.

14. Yes ; Yes.

15. That is a large question and cannot be answered off-hand.

16. None ; but present checks where found unserviceable must be changed for other and more potent ones.

17. Largely prevalent in India among particularly working classes and the poorer population. Its effects are no doubt pernicious, apart from certain medicinal value.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KHASUKHAN replied to the President :—" I consider that the present advisory committees are useful only in a way, or partially. I would like to have power given to these committees so far as location of shops and regulation of the hours of sale are concerned. To my mind there is some fear of the licensees' interests influencing these committees, but such influence will be negligible. I am not in favour of wholly elected committees. I would combine a non-official majority with the executive. I will not say that the executive unduly interfere with the decision of the committees, but I know of a certain instance in which the Collector consulted the committee with regard to the strength of liquor to be sold at a particular shop, the committee gave their opinion, and I came to know after some time that that decision was reversed. That is the only concrete instance that I know of during the last four years during which I have been a member of the committee. As a matter of fact our advice is more or less taken off-hand, we are given no time to prepare our case, no facts and figures are put before us. I would have a non-official majority for the committee, with the Collector at its head and a responsible Excise officer also as a member, and I would suggest that, except in cases where the Collector is of opinion that the decision of the committee is perverse and records special reasons for his interference, the decision of the majority of the committee should prevail.

" As long as the people are in their present state of education, I would not advocate that the question of the abolition of a shop or prohibition of sale of liquor should be decided by a referendum. I would, of course, make an exception in the case of town areas. In the rural villages it is the voice of one or two persons that prevails and the majority have no independent views. In spite of the fact that village *panchayats* are being constituted and adult suffrage has been introduced, I consider that the people are not at all competent to decide questions about abolition of liquor shops. In the cities, I would not have a referendum for the whole city, but only for small areas.

" The idea of prohibition is a recent nostrum imported from the West and the people here had no idea of it ten or five years back. It had better be brushed aside as an impracticable proposition for some time. If eleven out of twelve in a locality vote for abolition of shops in that area, I will not argue, as has been done by some, that the eleven should have no right to impose their will on the one.

" I am not in favour of the registration of drinkers and the supply of coupons to them to regulate their drink, as it would cause bitterness and discontent among them and would put them to unnecessary trouble and indignity.

" In the advisory committees, as at present constituted, the Collector is able to have his own view recognised. It is half official and half non-official, and the non-official members chosen are not men of sufficient independence. I do not think that the election of these members is good. A system of election to these committees will make matters worse. I do not believe in election. I would not give power to municipalities or local boards to settle the abolition or location of liquor shops. "

To Mr. Madon :—" There are no regular meetings of the advisory committee. The Collector might call meetings at any time, say, once or twice or even thrice a year. No agenda is sent out to the committee and the members have no time to prepare their case. There is no member in our committee who is a liquor licensee. I would not like the association of a liquor licensee in a deliberative body like the excise advisory committee. No additional shops have been opened on the advice of the committee, but there have been changes in the location of shops. "

To Dr. Patil :—" I have not so far made any representation to the Collector regarding the shortcomings in the location of shops or regulation of hours. I have visited the shops often.

" I consider that toddy should be treated more liberally than liquor, because toddy in its pristine or original state, unadulterated and unfermented and fresh, has not done any harm that I know of. After drinking it people may fall asleep in a state of intoxication, but it does not do any harm physically. The toddy that one usually gets in toddy shops is not pure : it is adulterated with water, saccharin, ashes, etc. It becomes an intoxicant when it is adulterated.

The Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—In the United Provinces, they have formed licensing boards in sixteen municipal areas, which have powers within certain limits to close three-fourths of the shops in these areas. These boards have a non-official majority. There are four elected members and three nominated members. Would you approve of a constitution of boards like that ? *A.* I think that the system that obtains at present in Bombay is by far the best. I would only urge that more powers should be given to our advisory committees and there should be a non-official majority.

*Q.* But that is exactly what obtains in the United Provinces. *A.* If the experience of the United Provinces succeeds, I would have no objection.

The President :—Should not a more advanced province like Bombay try the experiment ? *A.* A beginning may be made in selected areas.

*Witness* :—I would like to say something with regard to the reduction in the strength of country liquor. Decreasing the strength of country liquor is not a step in the right direction. You are encouraging people to take to foreign liquor. Forty u. p. country liquor is simply an insipid, tasteless and wholly unwholesome drink, and its effects on the constitution are very injurious. And again there is the practice among the people of mixing two kinds of liquors 40 u.p. and 60 u.p. That makes the drink much worse. I cannot give any scientific reasons for this, but that is the general popular belief."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" It is true that foreign liquor is taken mixed with aerated water. But country liquor should be taken as it is, the popular belief being that it is harmful if taken otherwise.

" I would suggest that 30 u.p. should be sold in Surat, though in the district it may be 40 u.p. "

To Mr. Madon :—" The present advisory committees have no initiative in the matter of making suggestions. They have merely to consider the proposals of the Collector."

*Notes and statements handed over by Mr. Khasukhan at his oral evidence.*

Messrs. Dubash and Company were distillers up till 1907-08, when there were some 26 shops in the City and 25 u.p. liquor was sold at Rs. 4-8 a gallon and shops were kept open from morning till 9 p.m.

From 1908-9 to 1917 there obtained what was called a fixed fee system by which shops were auctioned after fixing the price of liquor.

From 1918-19, 30° and 60° u.p. liquor came to be sold. Restriction of price was removed and there was the auctioning of shops. The licensees through competition gave large bids to keep their shops. Government got a large revenue from license fees. Increase in price led to decrease in consumption of liquor with loss in duty to Government.

System of auction is considered injurious to the trade, and is unpopular. A fixed fee system and a fixed sale price are desired generally.

Time of opening and closing of shops should be regulated according to circumstances of each city, with due regard to seasons or time of the year.

In Surat, toddy shops are kept open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Liquor shops open at 10-30 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. This distinction should not be permitted between them. A uniform time for both shops must be fixed.

60° u.p. liquor sales have greatly reduced during last two years in the City, till now they have reached a limit of 2 to 3 gallons per shop daily.

40° u.p. commands a sale of from 10 to 25 gallons per each shop daily.

People mix the two sorts, and drink. This leaves them at the mercy of the licensee.

For the City 60° u.p. should be done away with, and 30° or 35° be kept at least so long as sufficient check on importation and sale of foreign liquor does not exist.

The present number of 10 shops is just enough and should not be reduced further. Further reduction would put people to inconvenience, who would resort to illicit means or be driven to the use of more injurious drugs. The present number fulfils the condition of one shop to ten thousand of the population.

Reduction in consumption is due to :—

(*i*) lowering of strength of the liquor,

(*ii*) system of present manufacture,

(*iii*) mixing and use of low quality of mhowra with molasses.

They distil over proof liquor, and add water to reduce strength. This spoils the taste, lowers the quality, makes the liquor injurious in its effects to habitual drinkers. It has driven many people to resort to the use of low quality foreign liquor. The present system is resorted to on score of less cost of distillation. The present increased price of sale of country liquor has reached the extreme limit beyond which it would be difficult to go.

Foreign liquor—Brandy has a proof strength of 25° u.p.

There is a large sale of German Brandy—sold at Rs. 4 per bottle (a bottle measuring less than eight drams).

*Baroda* stuff is priced Rs. 2-8 a pint, but it is not much liked by the people.

STATEMENT I.

*Cost of liquor per cask.*

| Cost per cask of 50 gallons of | Amount charged. |
|---|---|
| | Rs. |
| 40° u. p. | 398-0-0 |
| 60° u. p. | 265-0-0 |

STATEMENT II.

*Price of sale per gallon.*

| Strength. | Price per gallon. |
|---|---|
| | Rs. |
| 40° u.p. | 12-0-0 |
| 60° u.p. | 7-8-0. |

*Note.*—The shop in Nanpura which is taken by the licensee for Rs. 37,500 (for 15 months) sells 40° at Rs. 10-8 and 60° at Rs. 6-12 a gallon.

STATEMENT III.

| Year. | Population in Surat City | Total No. of Liquor Shops in Surat District. | No. of Liquor Shops in Surat City. | Strength of proof of liquor sold. City. | Consumption. District. | Consumption. City. | Revenue from Country Liquor. District. | No. of Toddy shops in City. | Toddy sold during the year. District. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Proof Gallons. | Proof Gallons. | Rs. | | Gallons. |
| 1911-12 .. | 114,868 | 195 | 15 | 25 & 60 U.P. | 274,978 | 52,635 | 12,45,903 | 52 | 1,814,779 |
| 1921-22 .. | 117,434 | 152 | 10 | *30 & 60 U.P. | 178,159 | 27,621 | 16,91,880 | 41 | 3,743,538 |
| 1922-23 .. | 117,434 | 147 | 10 | †40 & 60 U.P. | .. | .. | .. | 41 | .. |

* 30° U.P. introduced from 1st April 1918.
† 40° U P introduced from 1st April 1922.

## No. 74.

### Replies of Mr. M. C. KELKAR, Huzur Deputy Collector, East Khandesh.

1. I am a Deputy Collector of 8 years' standing and have served in the revenue line as a clerk, mamlatdar and a Deputy Collector for 31 years up to now. So I have had ample opportunities of studying the condition and habits of people in five districts, the excise policy and its working and effects upon the people generally. I may state here that my suggestions would be applicable chiefly to the districts of East and West Khandesh and Nasik.

2. I do not quite approve of the excise policy of the Government of India in all its details. I differ from them in some of the view points mentioned in the extract printed under the question. I would try to put forth the Indian point of view so far as I know it. The Indians originally were not in the habit of drinking liquor to any large extent. I think that the very backward class of people living in the western portions of Khandesh and Nasik were in the habit of drinking mhowra liquor, chiefly in the rainy season and cold weather. In other parts of the two districts, there being very few mhowra trees, there was little opportunity for the people therein to get to drinking. But it appears that during the last 30 years or so the lower classes of the population took to drinking and have developed the habit to a very large extent. The western education and civilization brought in its tail the liquor among the higher classes, who, however, stuck themselves to foreign liquor only in the second half of the 19th century, and for many years very little serious attempt was made to check the drink evil.

If it is once granted that Indians really do not require any liquor, which is said to be necessary and congenial in the western cool countries, and that alcohol drinking is an evil for physique and morality, there should be no objection to take drastic steps to stop it by law and persuation. Hence the Indian point of view is that it is necessary that we should interfere officially and privately with these habits, moderate or immoderate, if possible, though we may not be in a position to irradicate the evil all at once. Under the circumstances it is a doubtful question whether it is the duty of Government to interfere in the matter. But it will have to be admitted that as long as the habit of drink exists in the land, the Government will have to control the liquor traffic and see to the needs of the people concerned. With the above remarks I generally approve of the general principles laid down by the Government of India in the Resolution dated 7th December 1905. I may however make bold to say that the policy is laid down by English people, who are as a nation not averse to liquor drinking and do not consider it as an immoral thing or sin, and hence it would not be wrong if one were to say that they being not so keen, sincere or sensitive on the point, their avowed policy is not enforced with the necessary strong hand as would be the case, if Indians had the power in their hands. I would illustrate this view of mine further on in giving answers to other relevant questions, *viz.*, 3 and 10.

3. Before replying to this question we shall have to examine the results of the policy obtained so far. I give below the figures of liquor consumption in proof gallons and the Abkari revenue for some years for the East and West Khandesh Districts together :—

| Year. | Gallons. L. P. | Revenue. Rs. |
|---|---|---|
| 1901-02 .. .. .. .. | 1,51,750 | 3,34,400 |
| 1907-08 .. .. .. .. | 3,86,400 | 14,14,900 |
| 1912-13 .. .. .. .. | 3,73,450 | 18,69,000 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. .. | 3,29,740 | 22,73,600 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. .. | figures not available. | 24,42,900 |

These figures will show that the means used with a particular object have had no desired effect. On the contrary, during the last 20 years the consumption has enormously increased with an abnormal rise in the excise revenue and also in the price paid by the consumer. It is true that the increase is mainly due to the increase in the still head duty levied and the appropriation of most of the profits of the middlemen—the licensees—in the form of license fee—under the changed system of auction sales. The duty on 60° U.P. liquor in 1900-01 was Re. 1, annas 10 and annas 6 per gallon respectively in three different areas, and it is now between Rs. 4-8-0 and Rs. 1-8-0 after 21 years. So we have to see whether the increase in the duty and license fee has really done anything to check consumption. The answer is " No. " It may perhaps be said that increase in the duty by a slow process has made the people gradually and unconsciously increase their expenses on that account, like a man who begins to have opium or strichnia in small quantities and then gradually increasing the dose becomes capable of taking in very large quantities without knowing what he is doing. Hence the result is that the policy has failed and the consumer is now paying very largely for the same quantity without feeling it. This shows that considerations of revenue are not subordinated in furtherance of the policy of checking the drink evil. As for minimising the temptation and discouraging excess, what has been done ? Practically nothing. The number of shops has not been appreciably decreased and the maximum limit of the quantity allowed to be possessed without a license has not been decreased. Except

in East Khandesh where the limit is now 1 quart bottle, in most of the Districts it is still six bottles. A bad drunkard does not generally require more than half a bottle a day. Besides this the Kewat system has not been honestly checked by the Department, but on the contrary has been encouraged for the benefit of the licensees. The hours of sales are also not sufficiently curtailed. All the bazar town shops are continued and kept open on bazar days as well. It is always put forth as an unanswerable argument that all this is done gradually with a view to check illicit distillation. From what I know of the three Districts of Nasik, West and East Khandesh I can say that except in the western parts, where there are a lot of mhowra trees, there is very little opportunity for illicit distillation. This could be easily stopped by making it penal to possess more than two seers of dried Mhowra flowers without a license, as there are very few people, except in the western parts, who use these flowers as food.

With all these preliminary and explanatory remarks I shall now make a few suggestions with a view to make the seemingly best policy really effective if possible. If at all there be real desire to mitigate and ultimately stop the drink evil, there should be no half-hearted attempt but whole-hearted and strong direct executive and penal measures should be adopted :—

(*1*) The still head duty must be increased a long way. Only care should be taken that country liquor is not sold dearer than any foreign liquor.

(*2*) The number of shops should be reduced by 10 per cent. every year.

(*3*) The existing liquor shops should be located at a distance of about 10 miles from each other.

(*4*) The shops at the bazar towns should be closed on the bazar days at least and all shops on holidays.

(*5*) The limit of maximum quantity to be possessed should be reduced to one bottle or even less, if possible.

(*6*) Kewat system should be strictly stopped and severely punished.

(*7*) Possession of mhowra flowers should be made penal beyond a certain small quantity in the tracts where they are not used as food. Where they are used they may be allowed to be kept for *bona fide* food purposes to a certain limit according to local circumstances.

(*8*) Gradual reduction in the strength of liquor.

(*9*) Expansion of educational institutions.

(*10*) Subsidies to *bona fide* temperance associations and village lectures and pamphlets.

(*11*) Introduction of toddy plantation and extending the system of toddy shop particularly at places where there is a large industrial population and hard working manual labourers.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. My reasons are :—

(*1*) Indian climate is mostly hot and the majority of people are non-flesh eaters generally.

(*2*) Innate Indian sentiment is against drink.

(*3*) All eastern religions prohibit drinking.

(*4*) Habit of drinking makes a man to be a drunkard particularly among the uneducated and backward classes.

(*5*) Hard drinking is medically against healthy physique.

(*6*) Drinking has practically ruined many a family and reduced good cultivators to poverty.

However considering the present social circumstances, including the illiteracy and backwardness of the majority of the people, I do not think that total prohibition is possible or desirable wholesale at present. But keeping it as our final goal or ideal, we can make gradual progress by taking up suitable local areas for experiment in different localities in the Presidency. With this end in view I would suggest that some suitable districts should be specially selected and all energy and means should be concentrated on measures calculated to bring about total prohibition.

5. I shall meet the objections mentioned as under :—

(*1*) At least in the 3 Districts I well know of I have had no instances of distillation of liquor from palm trees, jaggery and kaju. In these Districts mhowra flowers are used for the purpose and I have already mentioned above how to stop illicit distillation from them.

(2) It would certainly be difficult if the bordering states and foreign territories do not help and co-operate. But I think Government can do much to win over their help and sympathies and if they do not succeed then the borders will have to be strictly watched. Bordering British districts can also be treated similarly and more easily.

(*3*) Only the habits of the backward and hilly tribes and people cannot be easily done away with. But in the case of the backward people on the plains they can be checked and brought under control by and by. It is true that the process would create some discontent among these people, but we have to face it as we do in other matters as our honest and philanthropic action will be for their good and that of others.

(*4*) I do not think that special preventive establishment will have to be kept all over the country and where we have to keep it we can check the exactions as much as we have been doing successfully in the case of other departments. There should be no special fear on that account. As I have shown above, illicit distillation is merely a bogey always put forward in this connection, but I am sure that there are districts where there is very little opportunity for it and in places where it is a reality we have to find out means to check it as far as possible. Illicit distillation is a process which is very elaborate and very few people will be able to do it successfully and without detection. If, with all our efforts, there is illicit distillation possible in a few localities, it should be neglected as it will only concern a few people.

(*5*) There is not much real fear of people taking to other intoxicants and drugs, but these also can be checked and controlled as far as possible. But this factor should not debar us from attempting to stop the drink evil.

6. Certainly a serious and honest attempt to improve the present generation will have a large influence on the next. I am an optimist in such matters and trust an attempt to prohibit drinking will bear fruit at least in the next generation.

7. My ideal would certainly be total prohibition of alcoholic liquor. But I do not think that prohibitive legislation is the only means to attain it. I also think that in the present state of the Indian society it is not advisable to take that course. I think that we must take very drastic steps to control liquor traffic and should try to do away with opportunities for the people to get the liquor easily and in large quantities. I am of opinion that the avowed policy of making provision for the needy and the enormous revenue that is being received have unconsciously given the ignorant people more opportunities for being attracted to the vice in question. I therefore would suggest that the policy should be drastically changed and measures mentioned in my answer to question No. 3 should be taken in certain selected Districts in consultation with the local leaders, who are making *bona fide* efforts in the line and in the end legal measures should be resorted to to eradicate the evil, when an opportune time comes up.

8. Certainly not. I would have no objection to supply toddy or shindi to the very hard worked labourers in factories and docks in particular areas, as a beverage, as I am led to believe that these drinks are not deleterious to health. I am of opinion that alcoholic or distilled liquors should be done away with as they are not wanted and are destructive of health and money.

9. Absolute prohibition is desirable no doubt, but at present it is not quite feasible. As for the means to be used for controlling consumption of all liquors I have made general suggestions above in paragraph 3.

10. The means suggested in (*a*) to (*k*) are all very good by themselves individually. I may suggest some constructive proposals on some of them.

(*a*) The rationing of liquor in shops should be done at a large decrease from time to time in the present supply in particular selected areas, where there is a very little opportunity for illicit distillation. Only 5 per cent. reduction at a time would not do. In the experimental stage very large decrease in the ration should be tried in towns, where private efforts could be made in dissuading people from drinking by educative lectures, etc. Because the large bazar towns are really the chief centres which propagate the drink evil.

(*b*) Liquor prices should be increased at great strides and not by slow degrees as at present in areas where there is little convenience to go in for European liquor. In all places the prices of country liquor should be less than those of foreign liquor.

(*c*) The number of shops should be greatly reduced. I think that every liquor shop should not be within a distance of 10 miles or so from another. Particularly it would be much better to do away first with the shops altogether from large centres such as taluka and district towns and big bazar villages.

(*d*) (*e*) (*f*) These are good and require no special constructive proposals.

(*g*) We must restrict if not altogether prohibit the importation of foreign liquors by increasing the import duties and also strictly controlling the sales by higher license fees and other necessary measures.

(*h*) to (*k*) No special remarks are necessary. We must also spread education more rapidly by using the excise revenue chiefly for the purpose, in the beginning, on village schools. We must also take up selected areas for this purpose and concentrate our efforts on them. On the

whole, I would suggest that instead of attempting to improve the whole province at one time it would be advisable to take up particular districts or areas and to concentrate our serious efforts on them.

11. In this country a large majority of people are not in favour of liquor drinking and so, if we were to act up to the wishes of the majority only, the minority, who cannot possibly be weaned from this evil all at once, will be subjected to undesirable tyrrany by the majority. Local option could only be used in location of shops in particular areas and also in particular villages. I am not a believer in these so called democratic measures. I think that their purpose will be better served by the management of the business by an official and non-official executive committee appointed for a particular area, who may consult the people where necessary.

12. I think that if the present policy of half-hearted measures is to be continued then the local bodies may be entrusted with the determining of the number and location of shops. But even in that case I would not saddle them with the responsibility of contributing proportionately to the general revenues of the state by imposing taxes for that purpose.

If we, however, are going to look up to the ideal of total prohibition all over in the long run, the measures to be adopted should be settled by provincial and district small executive committees, specially formed for the purpose under the control of Government and not local bodies as suggested.

13. The present Advisory Committees are only Committees in name. There are very few competent persons on them and they are mostly under official control. If any members make any suggestions, they are also not given much weight. I would have only District Committees of official and non-official members, who should be consulted and they must have real power in their hands in these matters. But every thing would depend on the policy of Government.

14. I do not think that the evil of drink contributes much to the increase of crime in the districts. I am not in a position to say whether the drink evil has any effect on the output of work in general. In the moffussil generally the majority of people are agriculturists and they have got time enough to spare. The labourers are the people who drink and I do not think that the drinking much affects the output of their work. In the industrial centres it is likely that the drink evil affects to some extent the output of the work entrusted to the workers.

15. If my views about the policy and suggestions are acted upto, the arrangements would certainly go to reduce the excise revenue very largely and to stop it altogether in the end. But from this it does not necessarily follow that all the deficit in the general revenue, occasioned by the eradication of the drink evil, should be made by imposition of new taxes as a matter of course. This theory presupposes that all the excise revenue now being received was a source of constant income from a very long period of the existing Government. But I would make bold to say that the supposition is not correct. Taking the figures of excise revenue for East and West Khandesh we can see that the present high figure has been reached only within the last 22 years by the changes in the system of controlling the liquor traffic and the increasing prosperity of the people on account of the high prices of cotton and other agricultural produce. In 1901-1902 the total for these 2 districts was Rs. 3,34,400 while in the year 1920-1921 it was Rs. 24,52,900. All this increase of 21 lacs has been treated as a source of revenue and hence the question of finding out means for raising this amount by imposing of new taxes. If however for meeting the increasing expenditure of the provincial administration, increase in the sources of revenue is needed, after effecting stringent economy in the expenditure, some new taxes will have to be devised. I am not in a position to suggest new taxation. It may perhaps be feasible to have toll tax on the communication over the provincial roads and some export duties on cotton and other articles of the province. Really speaking it would be the duty of the local legislature to find out the ways and means for making up the deficit. It is not for a layman like myself to make any specific suggestions on the point. It is suggested in the note of Mr. Mead that the new policy of total prohibition or severe restriction will necessitate considerable strengthening of the Excise Staff for suppressing illicit distillation. I for one am of opinion that no strengthening of the Excise establishment will be necessary. On the contrary I think that the present establishment could be largely reduced in many districts. For example in the Districts of Khandesh and Nasik, if my suggestions are acted upon the work done by them could be easily done by the Police. It may be said that the present District Excise Establishment has been really doing very little work. It is true that on account of the excessive dearness of chief articles of living and other causes the cost of Government has largely increased and has caused a large deficit in the provincial budget. But that question will have to be considered separately by the Government and the Legislative Council.

16. I have no remarks to offer.

17. Generally among the lower classes and in some cases of the higher middle class people opium is given in small doses to young children up to about one year. I do not think that this giving of opium has any serious or appreciable effect on the death rate among children.

Mr. KELKAR replied to the President :—" If Government declare it their policy that they want to reduce consumption of liquor as far as possible, with a view to total extinction, if possible, and then call upon Revenue officers like Mamlatdars to carry on the propaganda, it will have a very great effect, if the particular measures I have suggested are taken, and within a certain number of years consumption could be reduced to a minimum in particular districts. But I must first say that there will always be the difficulty of the Excise officers. The shopkeepers increase sales with the connivance of these people. Together with the declaration of policy by Government, there should be the co-operation of the Excise officers. There is a popular belief that the Excise officers are always for an increase of revenue, because their promotion depends upon it.

" For the purpose of experiment in the reduction of consumption, I would first take those areas where the chances of illicit distillation are few and where the largest amount of consumption of liquor exists, *e.g.*, Nasik and West Khandesh, and East Khandesh excepting the western tracts of the first two districts where a different policy will have to be followed. In East Khandesh there are some particular villages where illicit distillation goes on, and an eye will have to be kept on that. The Vanjaris are the people who illicitly distil. In their case some other measures will have to be taken. For instance, the year before last, they had a caste meeting of about 800 persons, and they passed a resolution to outcaste those who distilled liquor, and in the course of a few months that tract went dry at least for some time. After all the measures I have suggested are taken, prohibitive legislation may follow ; total prohibition is the thing I aim at. If it is introduced all at once, there may be discontent and trouble about it. In the beginning it would be a good thing to supply liquor to moderate drinkers by the coupon system. If there is any discontent over it, it should be faced.

" The Vanjaris and some particular classes like Bhils of the western parts sometimes require liquor for religious purposes. That will have to be separately dealt with. They live under peculiar conditions. There is a large quantity of mhowra flowers there, and the Konkanis and Bhils are all addicted to drink, and particularly in the rainy season and cold weather they want it, and in their case a slower process will have to be tried, as it would be difficult in the beginning to induce them to give it up.

" Side by side with the rationing of shops, there should be a limitation on the quantity of liquor to be sold to each man. At present it is one bottle in some places and six in others. In the latter case, it tends to increase consumption by being taken to the village and there being resold, although not allowed under the law. That is the Kewat system, and it is generally connived at. The Excise Department does not take so much interest in it as they ought to.

" I prefer the ' on ' sale system."

To Mr. Madon :—" I am not quite sure whether the ' on ' system or " off " system is the better. It will be a matter for experiment, and I cannot answer this question. The lower class people drink at the shops, and better classes take it home, and so far as Indian homes are concerned, there is no likelihood of the habit being propagated. The higher classes should not be compelled to drink in the shops, and I would advocate both systems being allowed to go on. "

To the President :—" The advisory committees are consulted on very few matters, like the location and removal of shops, and perhaps on the point of limiting the hours. They have no say as regards the general policy. They should have more powers. I would have one executive committee for each district composed of competent people, who really take an interest in this matter. The taluka boards should be consulted by these committees. They should have real executive power, so that they may have some sense of responsibility. Government should declare their policy and these committees should have the power to work up that policy. There will be competent men to work on them. They may be constituted both by nomination and election. The local bodies may elect members to these committees. Two-thirds of the members should be elected and one-third should consist of officials and nominated members in the beginning.

" Government have for the last 30 years or more declared the policy of not taxing village building sites, and the same policy should now continue ; in municipal areas the municipalities tax them. If village building sites are taxed, there will be discontent, and the work involved will be out of proportion to the revenue derived.

" I have calculated that in Jamner and Erandol talukas only 5 to 10 per cent. of the people drink, and the average works out at 16 gallons per head, per year or about Rs. 96 worth of liquor. The drinking population in Khandesh is not large, only the Bhils, Mahars and Kunbis drink. Particularly the Rajputs do it more. In industrial towns like Jalgaon the labourers drink, but my point is that as long as there are no difficulties in getting liquor, they drink more, but if a liquor shop were two miles away, very few of these people would drink. If the question were submitted to a referendum, the women will agree to prohibition. The voting should be confined to male adults, and, if 60 per cent. agree, you can have it.

" There was a certain amount of picketing in 5 ot 6 towns in Khandesh, but it was done in an improper manner by hiring people who did not know much about it, and not by the reformers."

To Mr. Madon :—" Consumption of liquor has increased during the last 20 years owing to more facilities, to the propaganda of the sellers and the prosperity of the people."

*Q.* What, in your opinion, would be an effective jump in the price ? *A.* As long as it will keep the price below foreign liquor ; that is my highest jump.

"I know very little about the consumption of foreign liquor or any increase in it. My complaint is that the price of country liquor was increased very slowly and the people did not feel it. If it were put up suddenly from Re. 1 to Rs. 6, it would have had some effect on consumption.

" Toddy plantation should be increased because I depend upon the opinions of persons who think that toddy is a good beverage, and it does them good. "

To Dr. Patil :—" The present mhowra legislation is not applied to whole districts. In 1905, the Konkani Bhils used them for two months while they were wet in the area from Kalvan to Taloda, but not in East Khandesh. The mhowra flower is used for mixing it with flour in the western parts of the two districts. In those parts it is used only for a few months, particularly in June and July, when the flowers are fresh. If all the measures I have suggested are taken, I think the police can be trusted to look after illicit distillation. Of course, the borders of Indian States will have to be guarded. There were orders on paper to check the Kewat system, but in villages the patels used to tell me that a number of shops were kept on for this purpose. If Government declare their policy and if the control of excise is passed on to the revenue and police departments, it might be more effective."

" I do not think that 40 U. P. or 60 U. P. liquor is more injurious than 30 U. P. The town people are addicted to strong liquor and that is why they want 30 U. P. and 25 U. P. When I state that toddy is harmless, I mean unadulterated, unfermented and fresh toddy.

" I would put the age limit for supply of liquor at 20 or 21."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" When I state that the majority of the Indian people are non-flesh eaters, I do not mean that to the majority of the people flesh is prohibited by religion. I only mean that they do not eat flesh generally. "

*Statement handed over by Mr. Kelkar at his oral evidence.*

Consumption of Country Spirit in Proof Gallons.

| Year. | Nasik City. Population. | Nasik City. Gallons. L. P. | Nasik District. Population. | Nasik District. Gallons. L. P. | Realization. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Rs. |
| 1901-02 .. .. | 21,490 | .. | 816,504 | 43,401 | 1,13,000 |
| 1902-03 .. .. | 21,490 | .. | 816,504 | 35,534 | 1,08,314 |
| 1903-04 .. .. | 21,490 | .. | 816,504 | 70,035 | 1,77,931 |
| 1904-05 .. .. | 21,490 | .. | 816,504 | 68,506 | 1,74,130 |
| 1905-06 .. .. | 21,490 | 10,710 | 816,504 | 79,950 | 2,98,113 |
| 1906-07 .. .. | 21,490 | 11,725 | 816,504 | 94,691 | 3,24,395 |
| 1907-08 .. .. | 21,490 | 13,762 | 816,504 | 112,127 | 4,20,569 |
| 1908-09 .. .. | 21,490 | 12,124 | 816,504 | 81,802 | 3,89,863 |
| 1909-10 .. .. | 21,490 | 13,555 | 816,504 | 95,743 | 4,29,635 |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 21,490 | 13,468 | 816,504 | 115,416 | 4,92,633 |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 33,463 | 13,112 | 905,039 | 125,006 | 5,66,024 |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 33,463 | 10,907 | 905,039 | 111,555 | 5,95,079 |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 33,463 | 12,130 | 905,039 | 107,907 | 5,83,576 |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 33,463 | 11,812 | 905,039 | 104,359 | 5,63,219 |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 33,463 | 11,274 | 905,039 | 96,728 | 5,83,925 |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 33,463 | 13,905 | 905,039 | 115,194 | 6,63,873 |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 33,463 | 16,268 | 905,039 | 109,145 | 9,03,975 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 33,463 | 13,050 | 905,039 | 90,765 | 9,95,548 |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 33,463 | 11,555 | 905,039 | 90,279 | 10,43,608 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 33,463 | 13,458 | 905,039 | 74,697 | 11,36,303 |
| 1921-22 .. .. | 38,211 | 9,255 | 832,576 | 59,404 | 6,48,508 |

Nasik City.

| Year. | 25 U. P. | 60 U. P. |
|---|---|---|
| 1913-14 .. .. | 16,156 | .. |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 12,788 | 5,552 |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 11,087 | 7,398 |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 11,159 | 13,841 |
| .. | 30 U. P. | 60 U. P. |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 10,055 | 23,076 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 6,320 | 21,565 |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 7,222 | 16,251 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 9,234 | 17,484 |
| 1921-22 .. .. | 5,664 | 13,224 |

## No. 75.

Replies of Capt. A. K. NULKAR, L.M. & S., representative, MADYAPAN PRATIBANDHAK MANDAL, Amalner, East Khandesh.

1. I am a medical practitioner of 15 years standing in East Khandesh. I served in the last War in Mesopotamia and on the N. W. F. As a medical man I have had opportunities of watching the bad effects of drink on the human body. In 1921 I had an opportunity of watching the picketing of liquor shops at Jalgaon, East Khandesh.

2. I can understand Government not desiring to interfere with the habits of moderate drinkers. But when it is once admitted that alcohol has very bad effects on the human body, I cannot understand the attitude of Government in providing for the wants of any one at all be he a moderate or a hard drinker. Besides, the remedies taken up by Government are insufficient and inadequate; and no wonder when Government does not want to forego the Excise revenue at any cost. They cannot eat up the cake and have it at the same time.

Just as Government declare that they do not want to interfere with moderate drinkers, they have also declared many a time that they do not want to interfere with the existing religions of the land. Now as far as I know none of the religions of the land allows alcohol to be used by its followers. Government by countenancing the drink habit is thus indirectly but surely interfering with our religious traditions. This has a subtle effect on the human mind; one tradition broken to-day with the authority of the Government paves the way to further escapade and thus the general moral standard (which it is the object of every religion to keep at a high level) is slowly and surely being undermined.

The number of liquor shops has increased (the number in 1899-1900 was 4,104; in 1918-19 it is 6,675 in this Presidency). The contractors are bidding so high for the shops that it is becoming impossible for them to get any reasonable profit without practising not very legitimate methods of trade. Such things are made quite possible by the present system, and so long as such things happen one cannot imagine a contractor going on year after year in this business.

High duties on country liquor have resulted in people taking to drinking imported liquor as they find that they get a better and stronger article for their money. Thus one of the results of high duties and reduction of the strength of country liquor has been and will be to increase the amount of money being sent out of India. If an evil has to be propagated and nurtured then let the money spent on it at least remain in the country.

3. Absolute prohibition is the policy I advocate and so the present policy should be forthwith discontinued in favour of prohibition.

4. Yes. Because alcohol in any form has very bad effects on the vitality of the human body. In a poorly fed country like India, it is undermining the health of the present generation and thus paving the way for future degeneration of the races involved.

I consider it a practical measure. It should be carried out by an Act of the Council.

5. (*a*) Illicit production; this may go on for a time as many other crimes do but the Excise Department having been relieved of its present work can put down any such illicit production in a short time.

(*b*) As to Indian States they always take the lead given them by the Government of India. As to Portuguese territory the Preventive officers ought to be able to stop any illicit traffic.

(*c*) I have moved amongst such classes and find that their desire to drink has implanted this custom among them. There is no religious basis for it and hence there will be no discontent.

(*d*) It is wrong in the first place to suppose that as soon as prohibition is brought into force there will crop up illicit distilleries everywhere. Even if they crop up so promiscuously it is quite possible to put an end to them in a very short time.

The relation of crime to drink has been well established and it is legitimate to suppose that with prohibition the number of criminal cases will lessen to such an extent that the existing police can then have enough time to find and bring to book all illicit traffic.

Besides, by developing the Village and Town Punchayat System the culprits can be very easily brought to book.

(*e*) In prohibition I include other drugs also like opium, *bhang*, *ganja*, *charas*, cocaine, etc.

6. I consider that it will have effect on the present generation.

7. I think that prohibitive legislation is the only way of attaining the end aimed at.

8. Yes.

9. I have nothing to suggest as I think that absolute prohibition is feasible in a country like India.

10. All these suggestions mean mincing the matter. I can accept none. The crux of the situation is whether Government are prepared to forego the Excise revenue or not. This, in other words, means whether Government are prepared to retrench. As seen from the policy Government is not countenancing prohibition because of the loss of revenue involved.

11. No, I am totally against every other proposal which does not mean absolute prohibition.

12. No. The reasons are same as above. But I would assist the development of village punchayats and take their help in furthering absolute prohibition and detecting illicit traffic.

13. In the face of Government policy these committees cannot do any good beyond removing a stray shop or two at a town or so. These have no place in my scheme. Much better use can be made of village *panchayats* after legislating for total prohibition.

14. Yes. Yes.

15. This question had better been asked before the salt tax was doubled in opposition to the will of the people of this country as represented by the Legislative Assembly. If Government can put through such a tax after prohibition is legislated, it can get through another tax with the same ease as the increased salt tax. However, I do not think that after proper retrenchment there will be any need for fresh taxation.

16. Yes, these drugs also must be made available on medical prescription.

17. Fairly common amongst the agricultural class. Accidental deaths from overdose of opium take place and also the vitality of the children is lowered. It affects the digestion and faulty digestion leads to rickets and mal-developments.

Amlaner, dated 18th February 1922.

From

V. G. BHIDE, Esq.,
Pleader and President, Madyapan Pratibandhak Mandal,
Amlaner, District East Khandesh;

To

Rao Bahadur G. K. SATHE, C.I.E., M.L.C.,
President of the Committee to report on the
questions of the drink and drug traffic in the
Bombay Presidency and its total prohibition.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit to you on behalf of the citizens of Amalner the following facts with a view that they will receive a prompt and favourable consideration at the hands of the Committee.

The municipal town of Amalner has got a population of about 17 thousand inhabitants. There is one country liquor-shop and one foreign liquor-shop in the town. The local municipality being alive to its sense of responsibility for the well being of its inhabitants and knowing full well the sentiments of its population passed a resolution on 3rd August 1921 about totally prohibiting liquor-shops within its limits and moved Government in the matter. I understand that the municipality was informed by Government that a Committee was soon to be appointed according to the resolution of the Legislative Council on the same subject and that the suggestions of the municipality fell within the scope of the Committee's inquiry.

Now that the Committee is carrying on its proceedings we think this to be the most opportune time to place before you the public opinion of Amalner. The municipality is no doubt a body which properly represents the wishes of the people and as stated above it has already passed a resolution about the undesirability of having any liquor-shops within its limits. The Mandal has however directly ascertained the wishes of the general public of Amalner in the matter through the voters of the municipality and in a very short time it has been able to collect more than 700 signatures of voters supporting the municipal resolution, *viz.*, that there should be no liquor-shops within the municipal area. The work of collecting signatures still continues and I am quite sure that the Mandal will be able to secure in favour of this proposition the signatures of 95 per cent. of the voters present here. Among the signatures will be found men of all castes and creeds, men of all professions—pleaders, merchants, agriculturists, artisans, labourers, mill-hands, etc., literate as well as illiterate people. The signatures collected up to now are sent herewith. In order that the popular demand may be brought to the Committee's notice without delay to enable it to arrive at a favourable decision, this appeal is submitted to you.

I therefore hope that giving due weight to the wishes of the citizens of this place you will strongly recommend to the Government the immediate abolition of liquor-shops within the municipal area of the Amalner town, for which the citizens of this place will feel highly obliged.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

V. G. BHIDE,
President, Madyapan Pratibandhak Mandal.

Captain NULKAR replied to the President :—" If absolute prohibition is introduced, I would not be averse to fresh taxation. Retrenchment as recommended by the Retrenchment Committee, lowering of salaries of Imperial Service officers, fresh taxation, *e.g.*, taxes on amusements, motor cars and other luxuries, use of alcohol for industrial purposes, are the measures I would suggest for making up any deficit in revenue. I have not studied the question of fresh taxation and cannot therefore give any detailed figures.

" If there has been any decrease in the consumption of country liquor it is due to the increase in the consumption of foreign liquor. I cannot give figures because I have not collected them. I am sure there would not be any opposition to legislation for prohibition. Public opinion supports it. Although I do not think it advisable to take a referendum to stop an admitted evil, I would have no objection to take one and to include among the voters even the drinkers, as I am sure that a majority of them would support prohibition. I would also include females as voters, as they are the worst sufferers.

"I do not think that Englishmen and Germans who are given to drinking have better stamina than the Indians. It is only recently that our stamina has been going down on account of drink and poverty.

" I am not aware that Indian States would be averse to give up the liquor revenue, if the Government of India request them to fall into line with British territory."

To Mr. Madon :—" I know that Englishmen and Germans have been drinking for the last thousand years. Although they are now physically strong, I am sure they will degenerate in another thousand years."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" My statement that the relation of drink to crime has been well established is a general statement deduced from the fact that crime has increased *pari passu* with increase in Excise revenue.

" Fresh toddy won't do any harm, but it is difficult to get toddy in the fresh condition. In its fresh condition it will act as food."

To Dr. Patil :—" Alcohol is a protoplasmic poison ; it acts on the tissues and the nervous system. It is not at all necessary for health. It may stimulate digestion at first, but afterwards it has a bad effect on digestion as it has later a depressing effect. People who do not take alcohol are able to resist exposure better than people who take alcohol.

" I am of opinion that alcohol should not be permitted to a person at any age."

No. 76.

## Replies of Mr. JIVABHAI R. PATEL, Manager, Dakor Temple.

I have the honour to send you the following answers in reply to your questions which were sent to me with your letter dated 8th instant. I am sorry I could not send in my replies earlier owing to other engagements.

1. I am an LL.B. of the Bombay University. I was practising as a Pleader till 1912, and since then I have been managing the affairs of Ranchhodji's Temple at Dakor as its Manager. My knowledge of the working of the excise policy of Government is derived generally from my intercourse with people, and specially while supervising the picketting operations on the liquor-shop at Dakor as President of the Thasra Taluka Congress-Committee.

2. My humble opinion on the excise policy of Government is that it is highly injurious to the best interests of the country and it has resulted in starting it on a road which would lead it to certain ruin. People who were absolutely innocent of every sort of intoxicating drug have, by reason of that policy, imbibed the pernicious habit of drinking. It has stimulated intemperance instead of discouraging it; it has multiplied temptations for those who do not drink, instead of minimising them. The reasons which have brought about this deplorable state of things out of a policy formulated professedly with the best of intentions are, first, that Government have started on wrong premises, and second, that they have always kept an eye on revenue, though professing that considerations of revenue were always to be subordinated to the furtherance of that policy.

Government admit that liquor is a temptation which has to be guarded against, and that its use in excess should be discouraged. They lay down that the number of liquor shops should be restricted and their location should conform to public opinion. But they lay down at the same time that they should make due provision for the habits of those who take alcohol in moderation and that it is a sin to interfere with those habits. In my opinion that is the stumbling block in the whole process. Is liquor a necessary of life which is needed to keep body and soul together, so that Government should not interfere with the habits of those who take it though in moderation? Why so much solicitude for them as to provide for their needs? How can it be the duty of a civilised Government? The use of alcohol even in moderation is injurious to health. Once it is introduced into the body, it generates a keen craving for more which it is difficult to control, thus turning moderation into immoderation in no time. So long as one entertains abhorrence for a particular vice or habit, he is safe, but if he begins to lose that abhorrence, if he begins to connive at it, he is lost. A man who swerves from the right path even by an inch, is sure to perish. Prudential considerations have absolutely no control over ignorant people. In many cases liquor is the parent of all vices and crimes. It destroys the strength of the mind to withstand temptations and it destroys its power to control passions and senses. I am informed that it generates a craving for meat and sexual intercourse, and I am inclined to believe it. I also believe that it is absolutely injurious in hot countries even in moderation, however harmless and necessary it may be for cold countries. For all these reasons, I am of opinion that the parental solicitude of Government for the people who take liquor in moderation is misplaced. Further, Hindu and Muslim Scriptures prohibit the use of liquor altogether by declaring it sinful to take it. Such being the case there is no reason why a Government, which professes to govern India solely with a view to the material and moral well being of its inhabitants, should consider it its *duty* to *provide* for the consumption of people, a thing which, to put it in the mildest form, is in no sense needful, and which having a definite tendency to turn out positively injurious, is strictly prohibited by Shastras. To us Indians, such an idea of duty appears queer, which on the one hand declines to interfere with those habits of people which they themselves and their Shastras believe to be positively injurious in the long run, and which on the other hand, considers oneself bound to take active measures to feed those habits by actually supplying at their very thresholds those things which generate and confirm those habits. Parental solicitude would never think of throwing temptations in the way. Once it is admitted that the tasting of liquor is a temptation which should be guarded against, it can never be the duty of any body, much less of a Government professing solicitude for the welfare of its subjects, to actually tempt people to taste liquor by holding it before their eyes. A prudent guardian would never contrive to place his ward in a position where he is sure to fall a prey to temptations in spite of the presence there of some restrictions which may possibly save him. He would never think of trying such an experiment on his ward. It is idle to imagine that ignorant and even educated persons would not succumb to temptations if they are deliberately placed in their midst. You open shops in localities where the majority of the residents have nothing to do with liquor, and yet simply because you have taxed the liquor highly, you rest satisfied with the assurance that you have done everything in your power to minimise temptations to such people. What account have you taken of their feelings in locating your shop in their midst? But your duty towards the other class, and your need for more money, must stifle every other consideration. Is there any wonder then that the number of those who do take liquor is increasing every year, bringing more money to the coffers of Government in the bargain? I remember that in my childhood, in my own village Karamsad in the Anand Taluka, people could count on their

fingers' ends the names of those who were addicted to drinking and people would shun them as plague. But, thanks to the excise policy of Government, who, in their solicitude for the need of those few persons, had to open a liquor shop in our midst ; and now the number of such persons is so great that any attempt at enumerating them shall have to be abandoned as futile while public abhorrence for the vice is almost vanishing. If Government had sat deliberately to stimulate liquor drinking, the result would not have been more horrible.

The only safeguard which Government intended to work as a check on people falling victims to temptations and indulging in excess was heavy taxation. But here too their fond hopes were doomed to be disappointed. Instead of abating, the consumption of liquor is increasing every year and Government is also getting increased revenue every year ; and it is too late in the day to inquire now whether it had put an effective check on intemperance or not. From all these considerations, I am of opinion that the excise policy of Government is (*a*) wrong in policy and (*b*) in actual results it has increased instead of diminishing intemperance, or in other words the actual results of that policy have been the reverse of what were professed to accrue from it. Under the pretext of providing for the needs of those who use liquor in moderation and with a view to increase revenue, in spite of its protestations to the contrary, Government is going on opening new shops in all localities without caring for the feelings of those who do not drink, and even against their wishes, with the result that the consumption of liquor has increased to such an extent that if effective steps be not taken in time, the country would be ruined within a short time.

3. Holding such views I would recommend total reversal of that policy. It has been tried too long, and found faulty. Hence it should be dropped and some other policy should be tried. Very good results are likely to follow from restricting the number of shops and locating them in conformance to public opinion. But so long as Government would not consider money obtained from this nefarious business of selling liquor to its subjects as polluted, and wash its hands off, of the immoral duty of providing for the needs of moderate drinkers, all other palliatives are bound to fall. It appears strange that a Government which has sacrificed a great amount of revenue derived from opium traffic, from humanitarian considerations in the interest of China, should continue to carry on a worse traffic with its own subjects. Government has to identify itself with the best interests of its subjects, and then we shall hear no more of its campaigns against peaceful picketting on liquor shops under the pretext that such operations are being undertaken with the political motive of crippling the resources of Government.

4. Yes. I am in favour of total prohibition. My reasons are enumerated in the foregoing replies. The example of America encourages me to hope that it would turn out a practical and successful measure. Government should at once begin by reducing the number of liquor shops so that by the end of five years, there should be no licensed liquor vendor's shop in India. If necessary, Government should supply its favoured class with toddy as a substitute for some time which I consider less injurious than liquor. Government should also permit picketting on liquor shops with all necessary safeguards, or undertake it through official agency. By such means, with the help of prohibitive legislation, the vice can be eradicated from India.

5. (*a*) The arms of Government are long enough and its resources ample enough to prohibit illicit distillation of liquor from any source. Chemists can be asked to advise other uses which can be made of palm-trees, jaggery, etc.

(*b*) Nothing can be difficult for a Government which controls the smuggling of salt. If the native States of Kathiawar could be persuaded to accept the tariff-policy of Government as regards sugar, etc., by controlling Viramgam, they can be persuaded to control illicit manufacture of liquor more easily. Political Agents and Residents can be safely relied upon for such an easy task.

(*c*) I have no patience with that bogey of customs and habits. If they are immoral or injurious, they can on no account be allowed to come in the way. A Government which has suppressed suttee, which was believed to be a religious practice, which has passed the Age of Consent Bill and which has passed the Widow Remarriage Act, can have no right to urge such a plea in a matter which has Shastric support. No discontent need be apprehended unless it is engineered by interested parties. Government had shown no such compunction while enforcing the accursed plague policy against strong opposition. Then serious discontent counted for nothing and why so much tenderness of feeling now ? At least ministers and social reformers may be given a free hand in this matter ; and the odium, if any, would fall on them.

(*d*) Yes, it would be necessary to maintain a larger establishment, but I am not sure whether it is not large enough at present even. However, the ordinary police can be entrusted with that work also ; and there would be no necessity for maintaining a separate establishment. Stern punishment should be meted out to the black sheep of the department.

(*e*) I entertain no such fear. People take liquor because it is near at hand. Tea is not and was not a necessity for the people of this country and yet it has established itself in every home ; because it can be had very easily. If it is discarded, no other substitute will take its place. Such is the case with liquor. Toddy may be supplied to some confirmed drunkards in the beginning to be discarded altogether after a time. Opium eaters lose their habit in jails never to resume it afterwards.

6. I believe that prohibition should be effective in the present generation also. It would be a boon for the next generation.

7. Prohibitive legislation, aided by picketting and propaganda, would achieve the object.

8. I believe toddy is injurious to a small extent only and so I would exempt it from the operation of the new legislation at least for the transitional period. I would even recommend its supply to those who on account of their customs and habits are the objects of special solicitude by Government.

9. I consider absolute prohibition as desirable and feasible. The only other substitute for it is picketting.

10. Each and every means enumerated herein is beneficial and effective, if strictly and honestly enforced. I would add peaceful picketing through responsible bodies or associations.

11. Yes, through legally constituted bodies in cities and towns and through *panchayats* or Sanitary Committees in villages.

12. Yes. The loss is no loss as the swelling was artificial and immoral, and hence nothing should be done for recovering it.

13. No. Because they are seldom consulted if ever, and their advice, when tendered, is seldom acted upon. These committees should be elected bodies or they should be sub-committees of elected bodies where such exist for local self-Government purposes and Government should consider itself bound to act according to its advice.

14. Yes.

15. Retrenchment all round and especially in military expenditure. There are many posts of high officials, which can be safely abolished, and many more, the salaries of which can be reduced.

16. No.

17. Only to a small extent: and with spread of education it is disappearing.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. JIVABHAI R. PATEL replied to the President :— "I think that it is the duty of Government to prohibit liquor to those who want it even in moderation. If Government consider that the education that is given in national schools creates bad tendencies, they would be justified in stopping that education. But if Government stops such education to-day, Government will be condemned by people as a tyrannical Government and there will be discontent in the country. If the opinion of Government agrees with that of the people, it would be the duty of the former to face any discontent. As the majority of the people want to stop drink, it is the duty of Government to stop it. If they do so, it would not be tyrannising over the minority in the matter of food and drink, because I do not consider that liquor is either a food or a drink.

"2. I am for adopting prohibition by stages. I would go on by decreasing the number of shops and adopt picketing and other measures such as propaganda in schools and by public lectures. I would decrease the number of shops by 20 per cent. or more in the first year and finally extinguish the trade in five years.

"3. In my opinion there is no religion which does not forbid alcoholic drinks. I am not aware that the Parsi and Christian religions allow it. I cannot quote any authority from Hindu *puranas* or *shastras* showing that drink is prohibited by them. I shall send them later. If Government does not prohibit liquor, I would have no objection to their supplying liquor to those who are already drinkers by the coupon system so as to check inordinate drinking.

"4. My statements regarding retrenchment of military expenditure, etc. are not based on the actual study of figures. I have no idea what we are now spending on the Imperial Services which I want to be retrenched.

"Where people do not require shops no shops should be located. The way to collect the opinion of the people might be to assemble them together and to separate those who want shops from those who do not want."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"I have statistics to show that consumption of liquor is increasing every year. The statistics relate to Kaira which I have obtained from the Superintendent of Salt and Excise. I have made the statement that new shops are being opened in all places, but I have not enquired where these shops have been opened, nor can I give the name of any place where a new shop has been opened. My information is gathered from newspaper articles. When I state that Government should permit the picketing of liquor shops under certain safeguards, the safeguards I have in mind are, that there should be no room for disturbance, and that the picketers must be men of good education and temperament who will not use force. It would not be necessary to carry on picketing from year's end to year's end. After a few years, when people have been induced to keep away from liquor shops, there won't be any necessity to picket, as there would be no drinkers.

"Just as compensation was given to Indian States for stopping the opium traffic, compensation might be given to them for stopping the drink traffic. Even fresh taxation may be

imposed to meet the deficit, but I cannot myself suggest any form of fresh taxation. I do not like the idea of taxing temple revenues, as it would be taxing a particular class. I would have the tax fall on the whole community, not on one particular class."

To Dr. Patil :—" Illicit distillation is not going on on a large scale in Kaira at present. The Mhowra Act is still in force there. It is not doing any good, because mhowra is a thing which the agriculturists at least require in the monsoon for the bullocks and for themselves. It is used with their food, and for illicit distillation. By the Act, its use as food is restricted. Illicit distillation was going on before the Mhowra Act was in force, and it is continuing to the same extent even now, and if prohibition is introduced, it is not likely to increase looking to the previous history. Under the Act they can keep 8 lbs., but they have to get rid of it before the monsoon, when they really require it.

" Fresh, unadulterated toddy is not injurious, and may be exempted during the transition period.

" The practice of giving opium to children is injurious, but that is now disappearing."

To the President :—" Temples are religious institutions, and I do not want to say anything about their contributing something towards the exchequer to make up for the loss of Excise revenue, although I admit that liquor is an evil which saps the very foundations of society. The temples have schemes for educational and other purposes, and they concern only a section of the people."

---

Umreth, 26th April 1923.

From

Jivabhai R. Patel,
Pleader, Umreth ;

To

Mr. R. F. Gorvala,
Secretary, Excise Committee,
Bombay.

Sir,

While returning herewith my oral evidence I would suggest the following alterations therein :—

After " moderation " in line 2 add " because it is positively injurious ".

After " education " in the line 4 add " from their own stand-point of view, *i.e.*, for self-preservation, but not from the people's point-of-view, because its interest conflicts with that of the people ".

At the end of the paragraph add " but it is only an injurious luxury ".

Quotations from Hindu Shastras :—

मनुस्मृति. 11th Chapter. 90th verse.

सुरां पीत्वा द्विजो मोहादग्निवर्णां सुरां पिबेत् ॥
तया सकायनिर्दग्धे मुच्यते किल्बिषात् ॥

also 91—93—94.

तस्मात् ब्राह्मणराजन्यौ वैश्यश्च न सुरां पिबेत्.

Also याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृति. Chapter V, p. 253.

सुराम्बु घृतगोमूत्रपयसामग्निसन्निभम्

The drunkard attains purity by death, caused by drinking red-hot wine, water clerified butter, urine of a cow or milk.

See also verse 255.

अज्ञानात्तु सुरां पीत्वा रेतो विण्मूत्रमेव च

*Paragraph 4.*—The League of Nations has fixed the percentage of military expenditure to total revenue of a state at 20 per cent., but our Government spends more than 60 per cent. As regards expenditure on services, it is an undisputed fact that the salaries of Civilians, etc., including Governor and Viceroy, are the heaviest in the whole world and out of all proportion to the earning capacity of the people. These should be cut down in order to meet every deficit.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

JIVABHAI R. PATEL,
Pleader, Umreth.

Statement I handed over by Mr. Jivabhai R. Patel, showing figures of consumption of country liquor in the Kaira District for the last 10 years (beginning from the year 1912-13).

| Year. | 25° U. P. Gallons. | 30° U. P. Gallons. | 40° U. P. Gallons. | 60° U. P. Gallons. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1912-13 .. | 29,880 | .... | 560 | 145 | |
| 1913-14 .. | 33,261 | .... | 1,521 | 79 | |
| 1914-15 .. | 37,018 | .... | 5,624 | 317 | |
| 1915-16 .. | 25,796 | .... | 25,846 | .... | |
| 1916-17 .. | 27,908 | .... | 31,107 | .... | |
| 1917-18 .. | 29,960 | 8,752 | 41,335 | .... | |
| 1918-19 .. | .... | 28,416 | 46,375 | .... | |
| 1919-20 .. | .... | 28,592 | 56,481 | .... | |
| 1920-21 .. | .... | 25.867 | 46,234 | .... | |
| 1921-22 .. | .... | 17,378 | 32,710 | .... | |

Statement II handed over by Mr. Jivabhai R. Patel, showing liquor consumption, etc., in Thasra Taluka for the last 10 years as per Superintendent of Salt and Excise, Kaira Sub-Division's no. 13 of 7th April 1923.

| Year. | Consumption in Dakore Town. | | | | Consumption in Thasra Taluka including Dakore town. | | | | Number of cases detected under the Abkari Act. | | Total No. of cases. | Result of cases. | | Population of Dakore town. | Population of Thasra Taluka including Dakore town. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 25° U. P. or 30° U. P. | | 60° U. P. or 40° U. P. | | 25° U. P. or 30° U. P. | | 60° U. P. or 40° U. P. | | Mhowra cases. | Abkari cases. | | Convicted or compounded. | Acquitted. | | | |
| | Gls. | Drs. | Gls. | Drs. | Gls. | Drs. | Gls. | Drs. | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | As per census of 1911. | As per census of 1911. | 1. 60° U. P. liquor was abolished and 40° U. P. liquor instead was introduced from 1st April 1915. 2. 30° U. P. liquor instead of 25° U. P. liquor was introduced from 1918-19. 3. The Mhowra Act came into force in the year 1917. 4. The majority of Mhowra cases were compounded up to the year 1918-19. 5. The Mhowra Act was not applied in the year 1921-22. |
| 1913-14 .. | 1,604 | 25 | .. | .. | 2,884 | 27 | 153 | 23 | .. | 8 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| 1914-15 .. | 1,782 | 38 | .. | .. | 3,688 | 2 | 456 | 24 | .. | 12 | 12 | 11 | 1 | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| 1915-16 .. | 1,490 | 28 | 456 | 16 | 2,052 | 44 | 2,737 | 0 | .. | 13 | 13 | 13 | .. | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| 1916-17 .. | 763 | 32 | 1,758 | 22 | 1,223 | .. | 4,237 | 27 | .. | 6 | 6 | 6 | .. | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| 1917-18 .. | 1,679 | 28 | 1,819 | 16 | 2,387 | 40 | 5,764 | 13 | 329 | 4 | 333 | 333 | .. | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| 1918-19 .. | 1,329 | 36 | 786 | 8 | 2,155 | 8 | 5,470 | 2 | 26 | 2 | 28 | 28 | .. | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| 1919-20 .. | 1,314 | 4 | 605 | 6 | 2,106 | 32 | 6,162 | 43 | 21 | 6 | 27 | 27 | .. | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| 1920-21 .. | 1,376 | .. | 227 | 16 | 1,955 | 44 | 4,091 | 36 | 87 | 4 | 91 | 90 | 1 | 7,785 | 71,588 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | As per census of 1921. | As per census of 1921. | |
| 1921-22 .. | 832 | 36 | 52 | 40 | 1,095 | 44 | 2,339 | 5 | .. | 6 | 6 | 6 | .. | 7,821 | 76,787 | |
| 1922-23 .. | 653 | 13 | 505 | 6 | 962 | 17 | 3,005 | 42 | 37 | 8 | 45 | 42 | 2 | 7,821 | 76,787 | 1 Police case pending as yet. |

MEHRAMANSING H.,

Thasra, 10th April 1923.

Excise Inspector, Thasra.

No. 77.

REPLIES OF KHAN BAHADUR ADARJEE M. DALAL, B.A., M.L.C., OF BROACH.

1. I am a merchant by profession and interested in the liquor trade as Government Distillery Contractor in manufacturing liquor and supplying Government in North Gujarat and Sind since the last 30 years. I had also held certain contracts in the Madras Presidency in some of the large municipal areas of Calicut, Cochin, Palghat, Cannanor, Tellichery during the years 1884—1887. My firm also supplies raw materials, mhowra flowers, to most of the distillery holders in the Bombay Presidency, Central Provinces, Calcutta and other places. I have, besides, other occupations connected with salt, shipping, cotton, piece-goods and other business as Commission Agent.

2. My opinion generally on the Excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, the substance of which is quoted below question 2, is in agreement with that policy, and the actual results of that policy, as it has been carried out in practice, have been partially successful in so far as it has at least during the last five years in the Bombay Presidency, checked consumption or kept it stationary and raised considerable Abkary revenue. In judging and testing results of that policy it is necessary to remember how Abkary administration was carried on in the concluding part of the last century until it was organised and controlled by Sir Charles Pritchard from 1875 by abolishing the out-still system and introducing the central distillery system and concentrating distillation in prescribed areas to supply those tracts. In the Bombay Presidency, and for the matter of that in the whole of India, every big village or a group of villages possessed an out-still and for a nominal sum liquor was manufactured from mhowra or toddy or jaggree of any strength and in any quantity without any control or check or strength and no records or registers of issues of gallonage were kept. Huge quantities of liquor were turned out without any check in crude stills of any strength and sold or bartered for country produce in rural areas and if a register or record had been kept of those days, the beneficent result of the policy of Sir Charles Pritchard would be correctly judged now. Of course in those days the Excise officers had more in view the revenue point than the temperance or health points but with the revenue, the control and the checks, the latter directly and indirectly came to be beneficially affected. Out-stills were abolished and control and check were imposed on the manufacture and sale of liquor and gradually duty on liquor which was pitched on a low scale began to be increased. The Excise Department, with the new policy of concentration and the raising of the duty had introduced the minimum vend system by public tenders. Respectable contractors of good standing and status were invited to take up farms and were obliged to guarantee a minimum revenue to Government in a particular tract or area, and if they failed to fulfil that minimum, they were obliged to make up the deficit to Government. All excess revenue went to the Excise Department. This appears on the face of it as encouraging consumption, but such a safeguard was necessary in the initial stages of the newly organized Department to check illicit manufacture and import of liquor. Hundreds and thousands of petty stills in rural and other urban areas were abolished and displaced, and an army of illicit manufacturers could have flooded the district with contraband liquor, if honest and energetic and able contractors had not been selected by the Excise Department to co-operate with Government. By the contractors binding themselves to Government to guarantee a certain minimum revenue, it became their interest to make good that minimum by their exercising checks on the retail licensees to sell proper measures in an undiluted form and in keeping a large private establishment to prevent illicit distillation and the import of contraband liquor; Government alone through their establishment could not have completely exercised that check which a person who stood to lose a large amount might do. From the early and old reports of the Excise Administration it will be found to what an extent this illicit trade was carried on and how it was gradually put down. As illicit distribution and import ceased, legitimate consumption automatically increased, and with it Government excise revenue also increased. To outside critics this appeared as if the policy of the Government helped to raise revenue without taking any measures to check consumption. I wish to emphasise this point to the Committee that in the beginning years legitimate consumption was bound to increase from year to year as a result of a gradual cessation of the illicit traffic of liquor. If, as mentioned above, the Government or the public had any records or registers of the issues and sales in the out-still tracts to compare figures of consumption before and after the organization periods, it would have clearly proved that the object of that was to diminish consumption without diminishing revenue. So rife was this illicit traffic and so loose was the control exercised that even in big cities like Bombay, Surat and Broach the distillers, who were also the retail licensees, evaded payment of duties of liquor on issues with the connivance of the Distillery Inspectors, who were low paid and who had no knowledge of the strength of spirit or its purity and who could not read a hydrometer or thermometer and who had no idea about them. Gross malpractices were practised and prosecutions were launched against them and it took many years to check them. Illicit liquor was openly distilled from mhowra not only in out-of-the-way areas and forests but in large cities such as Ahmedabad, Broach and Surat near the vicinity of the bungalows of the District

Superintendents of Police and the Collectors. Servants of retail licensees and distillery proprietors and their friends the dhobis, fish-wives and other trades, and crafts such as gardeners, carpenters, etc., got free liquor in the distilleries not only to drink but to take home with or without the consent of the Excise Inspectors. The Committee can imagine what a tremendous quantity of such unduty paid contraband liquor must have passed into consumption during the years, unchecked and unregistered. When checks were imposed and strict control began to be exercised, it is but natural that they directly helped to indicate a large increase in legitimate consumption. Sir Charles Pritchard next turned his attention, after putting the cities and large important urban areas into organised control, to the forest tribes in the forest districts of Gujarat and Thana to check illicit distillation of liquor. In the forests out of scores or hundreds of cases not one was detected and so easily was the illicit traffic carried on that every homestead or thatched cottage possessed primitive cheap untensils, earthen or copper, for distilling liquor. The only way to check it was to bring the forest produce of mhowra by legislation under control. The Mhowra Bill was passed after a strong opposition from the honourable non-official members, but the enacting of that measure reflected on the increase in legitimate consumption in those districts to which the Act was applied, such as Thana, Kaira, Broach and Panch Mahals. The next step which Sir Charles Pritchard and his successors took was directed to abolishing the many distilleries which existed in each district of the Presidency by concentrating distillation in central places, that is, establishing distilleries in convenient places for manufacturing spirit and transporting it into depôts for distributing it amongst the retail shops. This also was a step in the right direction calculated to check illicit liquor from passing into consumption. When this was fairly taken in hand, the rate of duty was gradually raised without allowing its high pitch to lead people into practising illicit distillation or illicit import all over the Bombay Presidency. The British frontiers are conterminous with those of the Indian States where liquor traffic from olden times had been carried on loosely and without any regard to increasing revenue or weaning the people from the evil effects of this policy. Liquor in such Indian State shops on the borders of the British territories as a rule was sold cheaper than in the British shops and Government had to regulate the duties and selling prices in their shops with the object of preventing British custom to be diverted to the Indian States to the detriment of British revenue. Not only were the duties and prices adjusted, but, by negotiations with the States, an approximate equalization of prices and duties were fixed, with the result that the excise revenues of the Indian States and the British districts were benefitted without increasing consumption. Gradually, order and organization were evolved from primitive chaos. The Government of India all this while were watching the results of the Bombay Excise Department, and the gradual but steady progress in excise revenue was gratifying; but a disconcerting factor was the apparent increase in consumption which was against the declared policy of the Government of India. They suggested to the Government of Bombay that the minimum vend system was a factor which helped to encourage consumption and insisted on a departure from that policy by separating manufacture and the sale of drink. Thus the monopoly system and the selection of proved and able farmers were done away with and separate license auction was introduced called the Madras system. Separate contracts were given for the manufacture of liquor by public tenders and retail licenses were sold by public auction with minimum and maximum prices of sale with the view of preventing retailers from underselling or overcharging their customers leaving a margin between duty *plus* cost of liquor and the maximum selling prices to clear the license fees and the profits. The Collectors had discretionary powers to fix license fees in such a way as would leave some fair margin to the retail licensee as his profit to prevent him from the temptation of overcharging his poor customers. But the system did not work well. The retail licensees, with the connivance of the Excise Department's subordinate officers, grossly infringed the regulations and conditions of their licenses and made immense profits by giving short measures to the customers and public revenue was needlessly sacrificed by fraud. The late Mr. Arthur, then Abkary Commissioner, exposed these malpractices and in the teeth of opposition convinced Government to change this policy, and it was decided to sell the licenses by public auction to the highest bidder without fixing any maximum prices, that is to say, they were free to charge any price they liked. The results, as expected, brought in a huge amount of revenue from license fees, amounting to lacs of rupees. The liquor was proportionately sold at a higher price by the licensees to recoup the enhanced fees paid by the licensees and although Abkary revenue reached the highest flood level, consumption did not keep pace with it, but on the contrary showed a slight reduction. Recently, temperance movement far from being a social organization, degenerated into a political propaganda and picketing was introduced by the non-co-operation party to put immense obstacles in the way of Government and public revenues, with the result that the movement took a violent turn and the licensees and Government lost heavily by such a violent and dangerous political propaganda.

From the above history it may be safely said that Government have justified their policy of a maximum of revenue with minimum consumption, if correctly and carefully judged. I admit that in the early days of the organization the hands of Government were not so clean and they were more keen and anxious for revenue than for checking consumption, and temperance policy and the temperance preachers and party did not find favour with the Excise Department. But the policy, in its being carried out from its initial stages, to the present times, has resulted, with

or without the intention of Government, in making progress towards reaching the goal enunciated by the Government of India, when it is remembered that in the seventies of the last century and before that period there existed no policy at all and when there was no organization, drunkenness and intemperance were allowed to the detriment of public morals and public health without any compensating gain of increased public revenue. Huge consumption did exist in its aggravated form of cheap undiluted liquor of any strength, and public revenues for generations were allowed to be sacrificed. If early steps to check consumption had been taken by unduly raising prices and duties or by rationing, it would have resulted in failure and the steps that are now being taken to gradually reduce consumption could not have been successfully introduced.

*Checks on Toddy.*

I am not in agreement with the policy of Government in regard to toddy. With liquor Government have included toddy in checking its consumption and making it so dear as to actually lead poor people, in absence of a cheap and healthy drink, to resort to liquor. In Gujarat and the Deccan toddy has been a healthy natural drink from immemorial times and a bottle of unadulterated toddy with juwari bread and some pulse and lentils ( વાલ પાપડી ) and onions formed a complete solid nourishing meal and drink to the people. Government, by increasing tree tax and auction fees and imposing harassing restrictions, naturally enhanced the price of toddy and as its admixture with water and with other deleterious substances to doctor it could not be detected or kept in check by the officers of the Excise Department on account of its increasing price, Government have deprived the poor of their healthy, natural and cheap drink. If the high Government officers would but care to come into close personal touch with the people and care to know the feelings of the masses, they would find that this grievance of the people and their discontent are deep-seated and for the sake of the paltry revenue of a few lacs, neither the health of the poor nor their innermost feelings and real wants are seriously considered. It is the opinion of the Excise Department that toddy in its fermented form is as injurious to health and public morals as liquor. With due deference to their opinion and the opinion of some of medical profession, I am however of the opinion that toddy in its natural undiluted and moderately fermented state is as healthful and delicious as wine and beer. What wine is to a Frenchman and the other wine-drinking people of the West, and beer to the German or an Englishman, toddy is to a poor husbandman, a Bhil, a seafaring Kharwa, a Koli and a hardworking labourer. Under toddy booths and shade of trees situated in the open field, pure unadulterated, undiluted and undoctored toddy, with the simple and homely and nourishing food, is an ideal meal and drink of the poor making him and his family contented and happy. Some of the many physical and mental ailments to which he is liable are cured by a moderate use of this natural drink and such is his rooted faith in its efficacy to restore health and spirits that he becomes dejected and discontented when he finds that he cannot buy a bottle of pure toddy from four to six times the price at which it used to be had in the old times. It is fortunate that toddy-drinkers are equally under the ban in the propaganda of non-co-operation. If they had correctly measured the innermost feelings of the poor people, I am inclined to believe that they would have inflamed them to a pitch to break out into open lawlessness and violence and raised a formidable army from their ranks to cast their lot with the rowdy mob who break out into open violence and riots. These poor people are law-abiding and quiet and I would respectfully recommend that in the revised Abkari policy to keep down drink, toddy should rather be encouraged as drink in its pure state by placing it within the reach of the poor at a moderate price than imposing any hard restrictions upon it. By this policy a boon will be conferred on the poor and the poor will appreciate this with gratitude.

3. I generally approve of the policy that would modify the restrictions on toddy which should be relaxed. Tax on trees and fees on licensees should be revised and lowered so as to make it cheap and to attract more people from the liquor shops to go out in the open for their daily drink.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition and do not consider it to be a practical measure. The habits of the people from immemorable times cannot be changed by legislation and what the prophets and saints and divines could not eradicate, it would be impossible for the legislature to do.

5. The objections anticipated in sub-heads (*a*) to (*e*) are insurmountable especially those in (*e*), and if ever it was attempted, the legitimate excise revenue would go to the Indian States and the people will be forced to resort to manufacture illicitly and import from Indian States and their whole moral tone will deteriorate and cause intense discontent. The facts stated in (*c*) are understated. Drink with some of the lower classes is not only a deep-rooted habit but is, so to speak, intertwined with religion on festive and funeral occasions and any measure calculated to intefere with them would lead to serious discontent.

6. My opinion is that prohibition in India for generations is impossible. Consumption can only be slowly reduced by educating the masses and improving their social and mental and spiritual conditions. Education in the three R's is not sufficient. In no other country in the world is prohibition attempted, except in America which has been trying to introduce it for a

number of years and whose people compared to the Indian masses are vastly superior in intellectual and social condition, and when it has not succeeded in such a country it would be useless to attempt it in India.

7. Answered in 6.

8. Fully answered in question 2. I would strongly advocate to encourage toddy or shindy by removing undue restrictions on it.

9 and 10. My opinion for the means suggested for controlling consumption of liquor is

(*a*) rationing of shops. In India consumption rises and falls on the vicissitudes of seasons and crop and marriage occasions. In one year when the season is bumper and prices good consumption rises and if you ration the shops in that year the excess consumption will be supplied by some means, *e. g.*, by resorting to Indian State shops from long distances. In lean years and famines when people have no money consumption naturally falls and rationing is useless in such a year. Therefore in both ways it is a doubtful measure.

(*b*) I am not in favour of unduly raising the price of liquor. Poor people and wage earners who are addicted to drink would rather forego some of the necessaries and amenities of life than their daily ration, and to unduly raise the price not only puts them back in social and physical advancement but directly encourages them to crime and illicit practices.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops too much is also a doubtful measure. The custom attracts to the remaining shops as is found in many cities where in spite of reduction of shops consumption has not fallen. It is no doubt a good measure but should be carefully and judiciously used.

(*d*) I am in favour of regulating the days and hours for sale.

(*e*) Too much dilution and weakening of the strength though beneficial in point of health leads them to resort to European spirits and wines and other Indian made brandies and whiskies of higher strength. I am in favour of allowing liquor of three or four strengths to be sold in different shops from 25° to 60° and the duty and price so regulated as to attract customers to weaker strength spirits as has been done in Broach where out of a total consumption of about 80 thousand, 25 U. P. did not sell more than a few hundred gallons of 60 U. P. The shop-keepers were induced by special license fees to sell more of this weak spirit; until now the consumption is half and half.

(*f*) I am not in favour of prohibiting but restricting the import and sale of foreign liquor. Ample facilities should be afforded to distillery proprietors, or Government should produce in their distilleries pure and genuine whiskies and brandies which can compete with foreign stuffs, and by which home industry might be encouraged. Also fermented liquors, such as beer and stout and wines, ginger wine, other spiced wines, distilled from grapes and fruits, should be encouraged in Government and other distilleries.

(*i*) Young children up to 16 and 18 years should not be allowed to drink or buy liquor in shops.

(*j*) I am not in favour of subsidizing temperance associations from public funds, but Excise officers should be ordered to co-operate with them without the movement degenerating into open or covert coercion. Persuasive measures will be more efficacious than any mandatory measures to come into conflict with the habits of the people.

(*k*) I am not in favour of unduly restricting or prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops. It indirectly encourages one to drink more in the shop than taking it home to drink with his meals and allowing it to be shared by his family. By such prohibition or restriction more people would be attracted to a shop and it would tempt them to drink and associate with those who frequent it. I emphasise the policy of educating the people and improving their social and moral tone, inculcating moderation and temperance principles in the vernacular text-books and verses to be learnt by heart. Cold drink shops, tea shops should be opened by the temperance associations and કીરતન and bhajan and sermons given there by preachers and religious authorities.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. In a locality or village if a majority of people decided to remove a shop it should be done. Those that have votes in a municipal ward or locality in which a shop is located should be allowed to exercise their votes. In rural areas it will be difficult to exercise local option, and when a shop is situated to satisfy the requirements of a large village or group of villages, the revenue authorities should be consulted if the shop is objected to by a certain village, and if its abolition or removal is recommended by the revenue or police authorities, such a recommendation should be accepted by the Excise.

12. I would not recommend local bodies, *e.g.*, municipalities and district and taluka boards, to be invested with the determination of the number or the abolition and locality of shops in their areas. But if such powers are granted to them, they should be conditional on their agreeing to raise a part of the revenue that would be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers. If the Excise Department, however, would grant them a certain proportion of the Excise revenues raised in their areas and if any shop or shops from that area was to be abolished, they

would be interested in the Excise revenue to that extent, in spending it on education or sanitation and would not recommend off hand removal of shops without strong reasons.

13. I think the Advisory Committees have been found to be useful although in some cases local influence has been brought to bear on them in favour of or against the location of a shop. Committees should be elected by municipalities and district and taluka boards supplemented by nominations of a few respectable persons by Government.

14. The evil of drink in excess does contribute to an increase in crime and has an adverse effect on the output of work. Drink in moderation has no evil influence on crime and in malarious and insanitary areas drink in moderation has, in my opinion, no ill effects on the output of work, but on the contrary a moderate stimulant helps to promote spirits and fitness for work.

15. A net result of my recommendations is the gradual curtailment of liquor, but not prohibition. The revenue is bound to fall. There is a limit to the pitch of duty and therefore decrease in revenue must be expected. It is difficult to suggest the source from which to make up the deficit of nearly 33 per cent. and Government and the Council should not lightly embark on a policy of frittering away a safe revenue on erroneous notion and impracticable ideas. The Reformed Council should insist on a substantial portion of the income tax to be returned to provincial revenues and the remaining should be met from economies and retrenchment effected in expenditure which has been swollen to intolerable proportions. A moderate increase in land revenue to the tune of 25 per cent. may not unduly burden the ryots for whose special benefit the revenue on liquor is being sacrificed and the masses by reduction in drink and by the amelioration in their condition can be expected to improve their economic condition to enable them to make up some part of the deficit. Forest and irrigation are likely to yield more in course of time and it should be the aim of the Council and public men to insist on wise economy and retrenchment rather than raising ways and means of sources of increased revenues. Only in the last resort land revenue should be touched.

16. I have no special remarks to offer in the matter of prohibition or restriction of opium and hemp drugs. The Royal Commission on opium and Committee on Bhang and Ganja have made valuable suggestions. From ideas of mistaken policy Government of India succumbed to the influence of Home Government in wiping out the opium revenue which has done hardly the good expected of it to China but it has crippled the resources of the Indian Government and laid a burden on the Indian tax payers.

17. The labouring classes, especially mill hands, are in the habit of giving opium to children. It has an evil effect on infant mortality.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Khan Bahadur DALAL replied to the President :—" I agree to the principle that the consumption of all kinds of intoxicants should be gradually curtailed, no matter if the revenue of Government is affected thereby, because that is the declared policy of Government, and also because as a public citizen I attach more weight to the morals and health of the people, and Government should positively declare it to be their policy that there shall be gradual curtailment in the consumption of liquor, so as to reach the minimum.

" I would advocate the selling of food and non-alcoholic drinks at a liquor shop, and there is no harm if it is made a condition of the license that food and non-alcoholic drinks shall be sold at the shop. I would also advocate the sale of Indian beer and wine.

" In order to help Government in their policy of curtailment of liquor, local option may be adopted. In a city, a radius inhabited by 5,000 may safely be adopted for obtaining an opinion as regards the removal or opening of a shop. In villages, a whole village or group of villages may be taken, the grouping being left to the Collector. Even if there is a bare majority, including adult females, a shop should be abolished.

" There should be advisory committees in stated areas with elected and nominated members with the Collector as the head, who will have the power to take votes and to decide whether a shop should be closed or not, but if the Collector differs from their opinion, he should have the right of vetoing it, but he should record his reasons in writing and send the papers to Government The committees may be half elected and half nominated. I am not in favour of two-thirds elected majority. The municipalities should send their own representatives by election, Government will send their own nominees, and the district local boards will elect from the talukas. It will be indirect election.

" I believe curtailment of shops will come when the people are uplifted by education, but no temptations should be placed in their way. At the same time, they should not be deprived of liquor if there is urgent want. By rationing, if a shop in a certain area is closed in six months after selling the whole quantity, and liquor is wanted for marriage or other ceremonies, the lower classes will resort to illicit distillation, which is very easy. If prohibition was to come, every household and every cottage will be a distillery. Besides, there are the Indian States. In Broach and Ahmedabad, I know that illicit distillation was going on before the bungalow of the District Superintendent of Police. I am more of a believer in the general improvement of the tone of the people than in hasty legislation. In my own community in Broach

they used to have large quantities of *mhowra* liquor at the Ghambar festivals. I explained to them several times that it was not good for them, but they would not believe. But as the people began to improve in their moral tone, drinking is now negligible.

" I am for a reduction in the number of shops, but if people do want liquor, then they must be provided with it, rather than tempted to illicit transport and distillation.

" Indian States are not likely to follow the lead of British India, because that would deprive them of a great part of their revenue. I shall give one illustration. In British territory they were very strong on the point that they should allow retail shopkeepers some fair margin, as they did not put the shop to open auction, and prescribed a maximum selling price. The result was that with the connivance of the Excise inspectors retail shopkeepers made huge profits. They asked the Indian States to adopt the same system, but they would not, and their revenue went on increasing by leaps and bounds. Mr. Arthur forced Government to adopt the auction system, and it brought in about 60 lakhs more revenue.

" Formerly there was some ground for complaining that the advisory committees were not consulted, but now the excise and revenue officials listen to their advice. It may be made compulsory by statute that a meeting should be called once a quarter, and Government may prescribe the subjects on which they should be consulted, by means of rules.

" There is no harm in Government openly saying in the liquor shops after declaring their policy that they are for curtailment of consumption of liquor. That would remove a great amount of misapprehension. "

To Dr. Patil :—" The Excise officers may co-operate with the temperance workers, but not in the form of picketing. If that is done, temperance propaganda will have very great effect, and I am strongly in favour of it. "

To the President :—" Fresh toddy is a harmless, healthy beverage. It is adulterated because Government have made it so dear. Adulterated toddy is very bad. When in France I asked the hotel-keepers whether it would pay them to doctor their wine. They said it would be more costly ; natural wine was cheaper than doctored wine. The best remedy for this evil is to reduce the tree tax and the license fees. If Government are out for extinguishing abkari revenue, they might very well sacrifice these Rs. 3 or 4 lakhs.

" There is no harm in diluting high strength liquors with water which has been analysed and pronounced potable. Government cannot use distilled water on account of the cost. If the water is not pure, there is danger, but the water is generally pure. "

To Dr. Patil :—" Liquor becomes healthy by being reduced in strength. People complain because they want strong drinks. The first introduction of that system was in Broach by Mr. Rothfeld, who opened separate shops for low strength liquors, and encouraging them by reducing the price. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Government are not very strong on this point of encouraging home industries. They have got their own distilleries in Nasik and Gujarat, so that the contractors or Government themselves might manufacture ginger wine, brandy and whisky as is done in the Baroda State by the Alembic Chemical Co. Importation of foreign liquor should be stopped as much as possible. Wines can be prepared here, although, as we have not got large crops of grapes, it will be very difficult to get genuine wines. Perhaps only in the Nasik District they could be prepared, but in other places we can make brandies and whiskies. "

To Dr. Patil :—" I do not think that a man will drink more in a shop if food in the shape of food and sandwiches is supplied to him there ; if half his appetite vanishes by food, he will drink less than he would on an empty stomach. That is my experience and of others too."

*Q.* As you find it advisable that it should be taken with food, are you in favour of the " on " shop system ?

*A.* I cannot say that. If they want to drink at home they may be allowed. "

To Mr. Madon :—" I am in favour of both the " on " sale and " off " sale systems. "

To Dr. Patil :—" Even if the quantity of toddy in the shop is taxed and not the trees, there is still the chance of its being diluted and adulterated. The only remedy for it is to make it cheap. They will not drink in excess ; they never did it in former times. If people now lie on the streets, it is on account of alcohol and not toddy."

*Statement I handed over by Khan Bahadur Dalal at his Oral Evidence.*

[Figures of Population of the Broach District.]

| | 1921. | 1911. | 1901. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Broach .. .. | 41,341 | 43,404 | 42,896 |
| Jambusar .. .. | 10,217 | 8,991 | 10,181 |
| Amod .. .. | 5,469 | 4,916 | 4,373 |
| Ankleswar .. .. | 11,762 | 11,344 | 10,225 |
| Total .. | 68,798 | 68,655 | 67,675 |

| Years. | Cities. | Rural area. | Total population. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1921 .. .. | 68,798 | 2,38,956 | 3,07,745 |
| 1911 .. .. | 68,655 | 2,38,062 | 3,06,717 |
| 1901 .. .. | 67,675 | 2,24,088 | 2,91,763 |

*Statement II handed over by Khan Bahadur Dalal at his Oral Evidence.*

[Register of every kind of liquor issued from Broach Liquor Depot in the whole district.]

| Numbers. | Years. | Massalas Bulk with Bts. and Pts. issued. | Bottles and Pts. | 25 U. P. | 30 U. P. | 40 U. P. | 60 U. P. | London proof. | Total amount of duty realized. | Minimum revenue guaranteed to Government. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Gls. Drs. | Bts. Pts. | Gls. Drs. | Gls. Drs. | Gls. Drs. | Gls. Drs. | Proof Gallons. | Rs. a. p. | Rs. | |
| 1 | 1891-92 .. | 5,100 2 | .... | 53,619 29 | .... | .... | 13,500 38¾ | 49,440 ·1 | 1,54,052 12 0 | 15,000 | |
| 2 | 1892-93 .. | 5,671 3 | 4,189 9,889 | 63,391 42 | .... | .... | 1,24,110 24½ | 56,761 ·4 | 1,77,821 7 6 | | |
| 3 | 1893-94 .. | 6,302 42 | 5,127 12,506 | 66,644 36 | .... | .... | 8,158 33 | 57,974 ·3 | 1,81,578 4 4½ | 1,35,000 | |
| 4 | 1894-95 .. | 5,337 2 | 5,053 11,015 | 62,169 16 | .... | .... | 5,716 38 | 52,916 ·5 | 1,65,679 8 10½ | | |
| 5 | 1895-96 .. | 6,152 29 | 4,996 13,394 | 74,429 1 | .... | .... | 6,192 6 | 62,913 ·2 | 1,96,850 1 3¾ | 1,60,000 | |
| 6 | 1896-97 .. | 4,523 13 | 3,499 8,356 | 58,088 41 | .... | .... | 2,442 36 | 47,936 ·2 | 1,65,900 3 ½ | 1,65,000 | |
| 7 | 1897-98 .. | 4,975 35 | 2,242 5,721 | 49,611 34 | .... | .... | 1,679 15 | 41,612 ·3 | 1,44,166 14 0 | | |
| 8 | 1898-99 .. | 4,857 15 | 1,979 4,722 | 47,113 40 | .... | .... | 1,539 20 | 39,594 ·2 | 1,37,210 7 11½ | 1,70,000 | |
| 9 | 1899-1900 | 4,232 36 | 1,324 3,521 | 38,138 42 | .... | .... | 678 31 | 32,010 ·2 | 1,11,269 12 4 | | |
| 10 | 1900-01 .. | 4,308 44 | 1,973 4,516 | 50,193 44 | .... | .... | 1,130 17 | 41,329 ·2 | 1,42,802 2 8½ | | |
| 11 | 1901-02 .. | 3,957 36 | 1,760 4,050 | 43,675 9 | .... | .... | 630 36 | 35,980 ·7 | 1,24,479 10 5¾ | 1,50,000 | |
| 12 | 1902-03 .. | 4,356 20 | 1,749 4,306 | 50,767 27 | .... | .... | 892 3 | 41,699 ·8 | 1,44,217 15 6½ | | 8 Months. |
| 13 | 1903-04 .. | 2,723 17 | 1,207 2,789 | 38,480 39 | .... | .... | 551 45 | 31,123 ·9 | 1,07,562 7 6½ | 86,667 | |
| 14 | 1904-05 .. | 5,476 38 | 2,720 9,457 | 79,698 14 | .... | .... | 1,184 13 | 64,355 0 | 2,22,209 8 1½ | 1,30,000 | |
| 15 | 1905-06 .. | 5,116 44 | 2,628 6,526 | 69,457 12 | .... | .... | 690 6 | 56,206 ·8 | 1,90,248 3 1½ | 1,40,000 | |
| 16 | 1906-07 .. | 4,645 0 | 3,206 6,327 | 75,018 46 | .... | .... | 675 6 | 60,018 0 | 2,28,355 1 0 | 1,60,000 | |
| 17 | 1907-08 .. | 5,150 28 | 3,362 6,830 | 89,197 25 | .... | .... | 561 19 | 70,985 ·7 | 2,69,570 14 9¾ | 2,00,000 | |
| 18 | 1908-09 .. | 1,552 7 | .... | 85,382 7 | .... | .... | 480 10 | 65,393 0 | 2,58,955 0 0 | .... | |
| 19 | 1909-10 .. | 2,116 18 | 3,702 8,736 | 83,919 41 | .... | .... | 302 25 | 64,719 ·3 | 2,59,897 0 0 | .... | |
| 20 | 1910-11 .. | 2,477 40½ | 4,212 10,188 | 98,145 5½ | .... | .... | 160 13 | 75,531 ·4 | 3,00,872 0 0 | .... | |
| 21 | 1911-12 .. | 2,535 3 | 4,344 10,008 | 94,375 20 | .... | .... | 126 39 | 72,733 ·6 | 3,39,830 0 0 | .... | |
| 22 | 1912-13 .. | 1,744 15 | 2,382 4,136 | 62,810 5 | .... | .... | 6,869 20 | 50,713 ·6 | 2,56,288 0 0 | .... | |
| 23 | 1913-14 .. | 3,168 9 | 7,260 11,772 | 74,487 5 | .... | .... | 25,084 9 | 68,275 ·2 | 3,38,241 0 0 | .... | |
| 24 | 1914-15 .. | 4,668 17 | 7,150 13,500 | 57,582 40 | .... | .... | 31,673 39 | 59,357 ·8 | 3,45,168 0 0 | .... | |
| 25 | 1915-16 .. | 3,886 0 | 8,490 13,932 | 54,480 0 | .... | .... | 36,870 0 | 55,575 ·1 | 3,36,539 0 0 | .... | Madras system. |
| 26 | 1916-17 .. | 3,066 0 | 9,528 15,756 | 51,290 0 | .... | .... | 42,105 0 | 55,308 ·3 | 3,37,476 0 0 | .... | |
| 27 | 1917-18 .. | 4,039 0 | 13,572 21,324 | 73,005 0 | .... | .... | 53,255 0 | 76,073 ·7 | 4,64,528 0 0 | .... | |
| 28 | 1918-19 .. | 5,126 0 | 15,090 31,332 | .... | 64,373 0 | .... | 75,620 0 | 78,832 ·3 | 5,24,637 0 0 | .... | |
| 29 | 1919-20 .. | 4,157 0 | 12,156 25,572 | .... | 55,770 0 | .... | 68,730 0 | 69,440 ·3 | 4,61,409 3 0 | .... | |
| 30 | 1920-21 .. | 2,492 0 | 7,613 14,678 | .... | 45,550 0 | .... | 61,530 0 | 58,822 ·2 | 3,89,686 2 9 | .... | |
| 31 | 1921-22 .. | 2,216 0 | 6,198 14,196 | .... | 25,680 0 | 1,000 0 | 65,675 0 | 46,361 ·3 | 3,83,795 7 0 | .... | |
| 32 | 1922-23 .. | 3,567 0 | 10,854 21,096 | .... | 11,706 0 | 27,120 0 | 54,380 0 | 38,371 ·1 | 4,74,797 13 0 | .... | 5 |

No. 78.

REPLIES OF THE SURAT CITY EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

1. Surat City Excise Advisory Committee.

2. The Committee agree as to the general soundness of the policy of Government as laid down in their Resolution no. 5001-Exc., dated 7th September 1905. As far as this district is concerned the check on intemperance has however not been a sufficiently effective one.

3. The Committee do not advocate any radical change in the present policy except the introduction of local option in selected areas.

4. No. Apart from any other reasons it is not a possible or practical policy. This applies with special force to the Surat District, surrounded and interlaced as it is with Indian State territory.

5. The Committee are not in favour of total prohibition and do not understand what exactly is meant by the term partial prohibition.

6. The argument is in the opinion of the Committee sound but as stated above the Committee do not consider that prohibition is practical.

7. The Committee generally is not of opinion that the end to be aimed at is the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor.

8. No.

9. judicious extension of the present methods and policy.

10. (*a*) The Committee consider that this should be tried.

(*b*) to (*f*) Approved.

(*g*) Some restrictions are essential.

(*h*) Certain kind of licenses such as refreshment room licenses at railway stations require to be regulated.

(*i*) The Committee generally agree that the age limit should be raised to 18 years and children under 18 years should under no circumstances be allowed to enter liquor shops.

(*j*) Approved. Government might encourage and subside temperance associations, provided they do effective work.

(*k*) Not in favour of restriction.

Will do harm rather than good.

Many of the proposals suggested above can be put into effect, only if the adjoining Indian States effectively adopt similar measures.

The Committee advise caution in introducing each measure, otherwise illicit distillation and practices will be stimulated and more harm done than good.

11. Yes. As to means the Committee think that the decision should not be by a mere majority but should be by a substantial preponderance of opinion such as a $\frac{2}{3}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of those voting and not less than $\frac{1}{2}$ the total number of voters. The decision should be by a referendum. In municipal areas the decision should be with municipal voters and in local board area with the local board electors.

12. The municipalities and local boards may be consulted as regarding the location of shops. The Committee does not think that time has come to empower them to fix the number.

13. Advisory committees have been found to be useful to a certain extent. In the case of this committee it is suggested that one more non-official member should be added making their total five as against four official members. Excise officers should be called to meetings not as members but for purposes of consultation and supplying information.

14. Yes.

15. The Committee is not in a position to offer any useful opinion.

16. The general policy as regards hemp drugs and opium is sound and nothing is required except to proceed steadily on the lines laid down by it. *Bhang* is not substantially harmful and should not be interfered with.

17. The custom is common among the labouring classes. No effect on death rates as far as the Committee is aware.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. JAMSHEDJI MANECKJI ANTIA, B.A., LL.B., President, Rander Municipality, on behalf of the Surat City Excise Advisory Committee, replied to the President :—"I am not a member of any excise advisory committee. I have much experience of the toddy trade.

"I think that it is the duty of Government to make due provision for those who want to drink in moderation. It is possible that some by drinking in immoderation may take to excess, but even among illiterate classes their proportion is very small, five or ten per cent. It is not true that the majority of the illiterate who take to moderate drink become hard drinkers. But to remove temptations I would advocate restriction of the number of shops, and hours of sale. I cannot say that the present policy of Government has either decrease consumption or increased it.

"I am in favour of local option, if power is entrusted to a body who can handle any powers given to them wisely. I would agree that no new shops should be opened in a place where the majority of the people do not want it, provided proper rules are made to take their votes. I would also agree that a shop should be removed from a place where the majority of the people do not want it. I would however like to have local option decided by a small advisory committee composed of an elected majority of non-officials, with a few officials and a non-official chairman. I am against taking a referendum among the population of a local area to ascertain local option, because I believe that the voters will be influenced and their votes will not be independent. The present advisory committees are practically under official influence. If advisory committees are constituted as I propose, I would recommend that their decisions should be binding on the Collector; but I would be willing to leave the power of veto to the Collector, provided he gives his reasons in writing for overriding any decisions of the committee and also a right of appeal to Government is allowed.

"I am not in favour of total prohibition. So far as liquor is concerned I am in favour of gradual curtailment of consumption so as to reach total extinction of the trade.

"So far as toddy is concerned my view is that toddy taken by the labourers instead of causing any harm to them acts as a sort of nutrition. In order to wean people from the stronger kinds of liquor, toddy should be liberally treated. Toddy which has remained under fermentation even for two days is tolerable. Only if it remains for three or four days it gets strongly fermented. I do not believe that in all shops toddy is sold in an unwholesome condition. At the most toddy is adulterated only with water, sugar or saccharine. I do not believe that they use ashes. When toddy remains for two or three days, people say that the shopkeepers use ashes in order to remove the sourness. For this adulteration of toddy to a certain extent the policy of Government is responsible. Government try to draw out as much as possible from the licensees under the auction system. On account of the keen competition the licensees have to tender at considerable loss and they try to make up the loss by resorting to adulteration, etc. Although there is open competition under the tender system, the licensees are not free to leave their trade. They have in many cases taken trees under a lease for many years; many of them own trees themselves; they have their establishments which cannot be dispersed at a moment's notice. They have taken up the trade and they stick to it in the hope that Government would one day reverse their policy. The old policy of a fixed fee system with control of prices gave a margin of profit to the licensees and worked well, and I would advocate a reversal to that policy.

"I do not believe that toddy drinking leads to excessive intoxication and to people lying on the road. This happens only in five per cent. of cases.

"I would not make the choice between the "off" sale system and the "on" sale; both have their advantages and disadvantages.

"The present system of prohibiting toddy more than 24 hours' old leads to corruption. The licensees cannot stick to the rule. Once they get their toddy, they cannot always sell all they get and they have to keep it for some time. They therefore try to escape the vigilance of the excise officials. I have no preference for the sale of liquor by Government officials, because I do not believe that Government officials will be less keen in making illicit gains than the private contractors. I do not think that it is possible for Government to control the sale of toddy by selling toddy themselves through Government servants.

"I would have no objection to Government declaring it their policy that consumption of liquor should be gradually curtailed with a view to its total extinction or as near extinction as possible. I would, however, desire that the period of gradual extinction should be longer rather than shorter. I have no objection to excise and revenue officials carrying on a propaganda that it is Government's policy to bring consumption of liquor in the country to complete extinction in a course of years."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol:—"Even when adulterated I consider toddy to be less harmful than liquor. The percentage of alcohol is less in toddy than in liquor. What adulteration there is, is only by water and sugar. Moreover, toddy is not allowed to get very old. Provided toddy is made cheap enough, I do not think it will be impossible to get toddy in its fresh condition"

To Dr. Patil:—"The price of toddy 20 years back was two to three annas a gallon, now it is ten annas to twelve annas per gallon. If Government restricts the sale of toddy to the labouring classes in the evening only, I would not mind it; this would be possible only in areas where the labouring classes live. They seldom drink in the morning or afternoon. Toddy drawn in the

morning does not get fermented by the evening. The pots, so far as I know, are washed before the toddy is drawn in them. Even if it intoxicates a little, there is no harm."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I have not seen many drivers of private cars drinking to such an extent as to make them unsafe and inefficient."

To Dr. Patil :—"If here is a rush at the shop owing to toddy being restricted to the evening hours for the working classes, more shops should be opened. If toddy is taken hot, it lessens the alcohol, but it would not be possible for the shopkeepers to serve it hot to all their customers ; and if it is allowed to get cool, after being heated once, would make it insipid."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" It may take 20 to 25 years for prohibition to come in by the gradual curtailment of consumption. There should be temperance propaganda in schools."

To Dr. Patil :—" Government have tried their utmost to detect adulteration in toddy, but without success. I am not prepared to confirm that toddy is doctored with *dhatura*, opium, nux vomica, or aconite. I have heard that they use saccharine and water, and foam syrup."

## No. 79.

## Replies of the AHMEDABAD SANITARY ASSOCIATION.

1. The Ahmedabad Sanitary Association was founded in 1912 with a view to study local questions and conditions of health, ill-health, high rate of infant, child and adult mortality, in consultation and co-operation with the municipality and Government. Their president, vice-president, secretaries and members of the working committee and general body are doctors, pleaders, mill-owners, government servants, merchants, other professional and business men of all sorts.

From the year 1920 the alcohol question engaged our attention, and Mr. N. K. Desai, B.A., whose services were lent to us by the Government of Bombay to work as Organising Secretary and who previously worked as Honorary Secretary of the Broach Sanitary Association for over 5 years and studied the question as a social worker for a long time, watched and studied local conditions from all points of view. Then a vigorous campaign was organised by street, caste and hall lectures, by lantern slides and illustrated charts. Lectures and demonstrations were also held in villages within the radius of 10 miles from Ahmedabad. A large number of persons gave up drinking at our persuasion.

Under these circumstances, the members of our Association and specially the working committee can give a reliable opinion with confidence on the subject as desired by you. The Mill-owners' Association of Ahmedabad, Total Abstinence Association and Dr. Jacob E. Solomon of Ahmedabad have answered these questions in consultation with us and from our viewpoint. This means that our authoritative study in the matter has created an agreeable atmosphere on the point. However, the Association have appointed Mr. N. K. Desai, B.A., as their representative, owing to the reasons stated above, to give evidence before your Committee and asked him to give the benefit of his experience by answering these questions from their viewpoint. His evidence will be very useful as he has studied the questions statistically as well as from social and economic standpoints for the whole of Gujarat.

2 (*a*). The policy is totally based on Western lines, and it ignores all Indian traditions and customs. Drink is never considered by any race or religion in India as a necessity. It is considered to be a very great evil by every one of them. The people as a whole would rather wish to eradicate the evil. Here the Government's and people's standpoints differ entirely, as they do in many cases. Both the drunkards and temperates in India admit it as an evil and would wish to give it up.

Again, the policy has been a total failure, as the increase both in the number of consumers and the gallons consumed show that all efforts to minimise temptation and to encourage moderation have been of little avail. Even increase in price is not of much avail for the labour population of the Presidency. Statistics in the Excise administration report of 1920-21 show that in Bandra and Bassein hardly 12 to 13 per cent. of the adult population do not drink. I have worked out these figures by taking the number of gallons consumed in these towns and, taking approximately 50 persons to consume a gallon on an average, the drinking population of a town is found out, and then from the actual population the percentage is found out. By this process, the percentage for the Presidency is only 2·2 and the total number of drinking population is 3,58,053; or, taking 16 persons to consume a gallon, we have 1,19,351 persons. Even from the population we should deduct 20 per cent. of children under 12 and 40 per cent. of adult women, who generally do not drink; then the adult males likely to drink will be 40 per cent. only of the total population. Working out the percentage from the drinking percentage of each town, we have the following simple figures for Gujarat towns, districts and the whole Presidency :—

*Maximum drinking population.*

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahmedabad city | .. | One drinker | per every | 10 | adults. |
| Ahmedabad District | .. | ,, | ,, | 30 | ,, |
| Kaira District | .. | ,, | ,, | 50 | ,, |
| Panch Mahals District | .. | ,, | ,, | 15 | ,, |
| Broach District | .. | ,, | ,, | 16 | ,, |
| Broach City | .. | ,, | ,, | 5 | ,, |
| Surat City | .. | ,, | ,, | 9 | ,, |
| Surat District | .. | ,, | ,, | 7 | ,, |
| Bandra City | .. | ,, | ,, | 1·7 | ,, |
| Bombay City | .. | ,, | ,, | 4 | ,, |
| Bassein City | .. | ,, | ,, | 1·6 | ,, |
| Panvel City | .. | ,, | ,, | 2·7 | ,, |
| Alibag City | .. | ,, | ,, | 2·9 | ,, |
| For the whole Presidency | .. | ,, | ,, | 23 | ,, |
| For the urban area | .. | ,, | ,, | 17·5 | ,, |
| For the rural area | .. | ,, | ,, | 33 | ,, |

Minimum may be put 1-3 of the above figures, *i.e.*, thrice the number of adults per one drinker.

These figures show that the policy of temperance is not quite successful and the number of drinkers is fast increasing in a naturally sober country like India.

Looking to the climatic conditions of the country, the failure of the temperance movement all over the world, the strong advocacy of America for total prohibition, better knowledge of the customs and the ideals of the country by the Government, and the world's change in ideals and viewpoints in every matter after the great world war, the Government's policy enunciated in 1905 should be recast and total prohibition should be put as the goal.

2 (*b*). The actual results of the policy as shown in (*a*) have been far from satisfactory. At present a gallon of wine is sold at Rs. 12 to 15 and every temperate drinker, who is consuming one gallon in 50 days, may be said to consume liquor worth Rs. 9 per month. In Bombay and Ahmedabad most of the mill-hands get Rs. 22 to 30 a month and in agricultural villages an adult does not get more than Rs. 12 a month. Of course, the skilled labourers earn Rs. 2 to 3 per day, but their number is very small. The foregoing paragraphs show that the above policy has not put an effective check on intemperance. Reduction of shops and raising the price have not reduced consumption. In villages, where there are no shops or where they have been closed, the number of drinkers is surely low. The statistics show that in towns the shops are very near and they are not few. The least, the longest and the average distances between any two shops in urban area are 528 square feet (Ahmedabad District), 5·2 square miles (Kaira District), and 4,128 square feet (average). In rural areas, these figures are 10·8 square miles (Surat District), 552 square miles (Ahmednagar District), and 54·5 square miles (average). This means there is one shop per every 7,142 and 9,090 persons of the urban and rural population. Or, there is one shop per every 171 and 109 urban and rural drinkers, calculating at the maximum rate of 6 per cent. and 3 per cent. of the total adult population of urban and rural areas. We would propose to make it a rule to register the exact number of drinkers daily, in each shop, with a view to check the rate of consumption. The selling price of liquor seems to have been raised to its maximum so much so that 12 per cent. to 16 per cent. and even more of the daily income of Rs. 3 to 2 is spent on drink, even by the so-called temperate drinker. For those who earn Re. 1 or less have to suffer great hardship, as they spend on drink 40 per cent. or nearly the whole of their income and have to depend upon the earnings of their wives and children.

3. We think that the above policy should be wholly abandoned to make room for total prohibition on American lines. We propose that this total prohibition should not be enforced all at once but be executed in the course of 5 or, at the latest, in the course of 10 years. The line of its execution is as under :—

(1) The number of shops should be reduced by local option. There should not be a shop within the radius of $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the existing shop in a town locality, where the adult population (over 16 years), both male and female, may vote by majority against it. The votes may be taken in each locality fixed by this limit. In the case of a village, votes may be taken for the whole village.

(2) Supply every shop a fixed quantity, which should be less by 20 per cent. of its last year's average daily consumption. Thus, at the end of the 4th year no liquor would be supplied to any shop. Thus, all the difficulties of total prohibition could be realised and effective checks could be put against them during this interval.

(3) The hours of sale should be curtailed, say, the time should be from 11-30 to 6-30 p.m. in winter and up to 7 p.m. in summer and during the monsoon.

(4) Closing all the shops on Sundays and public holidays, and also on fortnightly pay days in industrial centres.

(5) Restricting the importation and sale of foreign liquor by restricting the number of licensees for such purposes and imposing the maximum limit of quantity saleable by each licensee.

(6) Raising the present age limit of customers to 16 years and prohibiting any supply of liquor to women.

(7) The supply of liquor to each customer should not be more than a dram per day and he should not be allowed to take outside the shop more than that quantity of liquor for social purposes, and up to one bottle, without a permit from the Excise officer.

(8) It would be better to have the shops worked by Government to put an effective check on consumption. At present the liquor is sold at Rs. 12 to 15 a gallon and at that rate well-paid alesmen and supervisors (who should be total abstainers) can sell on behalf of Government.

4. We favour total prohibition because—

(*i*) Drunkenness is increasing all throughout the world, inspite of all restrictive measures.

(*ii*) Drinking even in moderation does harm to the physique and gradual increase in doses is needed in majority of cases.

(*iii*) Criminal tendencies are also traceable to this habit.

(*iv*) It damages man's working capacities, causes loss of efficiency, promotes ill-health and encourages many forms of vice.

(*v*) Liquor is not at all considered to be a necessity of life, specially in India. The people of India being largely illiterate, temperance is not possible with them, if liquor could be easily obtained by them.

(*vi*) Its use is considered sinful by both the Hindu and Mahomedan religions.

(*vii*) It is only 3½ lakhs of people at the most (or really 1 lakh of people), who give nearly Rs. 3¼ crores of liquor revenue and each of them spends over Rs. 100 per annum on an average. Nearly Rs. 4¼ crores are wasted away every year, which is really a large sum for a poor country and ought to be saved.

(*viii*) We are quite convinced that its use would disappear and people would not much feel it, after a time, if total prohibition is enforced by legislation.

Although there are many difficulties to be overcome, total prohibition is still practical.

In answer to question 3 we have suggested means to carry it out. There it is proposed to complete total prohibition in five years to enable the provincial council to enact prohibition laws on American lines adapted to our conditions. This will also give time to make effective abkari laws to punish illicit production, sale, transport and possession. This interval will not cause much disturbance in Government finances all of a sudden, will not much inconvenience hard drinkers and will minimise the possibilities of illicit traffic.

5. (*a*) The difficulty of meeting with illicit distillation on a large scale is not real. The facilities spoken of exist even to-day and they are not utilised on a large scale. There were only 2,629 such offences detected by the Excise Department last year. There is at present in rural areas only one shop on an average per 52 square miles and towns people have hardly any time and opportunity to do the work undetected.

(*b*) If one province were to decide for total prohibition, all the Indian States, the Portuguese and French territories and other British Provinces would surely consider the question favourably. The only difficult question for all of us to solve is how to meet the losses of the alcohol revenue. Again in the Bombay Presidency, the Excise work for most of the smaller states of Gujarat and Kathiawar is done by the British Government and it would not be difficult to move them to adopt our Government's policy. How to make up this loss is taken up in answer to question 15.

(*c*) The customs and habits relating to alcohol are not of very long standing. No certain classes could be traced all over the Presidency, who exclusively cannot do without drinking. If there are any, they will come round in five years. Most of them are very eager to have a caste resolution to stop its use in caste functions and would not be sorry to see total prohibition enforced. Their opinion will be also educated in five years, during which time total prohibition will be complete. Again, the present percentage of drinkers is only 2·2, or even less than that; so their discontent will not be very great, and in the course of five years most of them will be giving it up.

(*d*) The present Excise Staff has two-fold work, (*1*) supervision of shops and (*2*) detection of illicit distillation. They will be relieved of supervision work, when prohibition will be complete. They can be relieved of this work to a greater extent if these shops could be run departmentally by competent men. Again, by selling country liquor at Rs. 20 a gallon, we can realise about Rs. 5¼ crores, including the total revenue—license fee and still duty—of Rs. 3¼ crores. Deducting out of this the real cost of liquor at annas 8 per gallon* the amount of Rs. 7 lakhs and nearly half this amount as the cost of running these shops, the total income for the first year will be over 5 crores. Having 20 per cent. less sale in the first year, we can have Rs. 4 crores net income in the first year of total prohibition. There will be no loss of revenue from toddy and fermented liquors, foreign spirits and medicated wines, opium and hemp drugs, which will amount to Rs. 92 lakhs. At the end of 5 years, there would be a controlled fall of about Rs. 25 lakhs in the sale of foreign and fermented liquors and wines. So Rs. 50 lakhs may be said to be the steady income. At present the cost of the Excise establishments is nearly Rs. 25 lakhs; so from the above amount Rs. 25 lakhs more can be spent for the special preventive staff, over and above the existing staff, if it be necessary.

With only one shop at 52 square miles on an average in rural areas, there is not so much illicit distillation everywhere. It is a sure proof that there would not be a serious increase in such offences, with total prohibition gradually enforced in 5 years. The highest number of such offences, over 200 and nearly up to 500, is in Kaira, Thana, Panch Mahals and West Khandesh Districts, where there is only one shop per 25 to 57 square miles of the rural area; while places like Sholapur, Ahmednagar and Poona, where there is not a single shop for over 200 miles have only 11 and less offences. It is Kaira and West Khandesh which have half the number of total offences. The staff could be more strictly supervised and those who are not found earnestly desiring to enforce total prohibition may be asked to leave the department. The police may be asked to help in the matter. The difficulty will not be so great as the public opinion in the country is in favour of total prohibition.

* 18 maunds of mowhra cost Rs. 20, *i.e.*, 1 maund for about Rs. 1-2 from which 4 gallons of liquor can be taken out, *i.e.*, one gallon would cost 4½ as. + 3½ as. cost of labour, freight, interest on running capital and machinery = 8 as. In some places the cost is a little higher.

(*e*) All other drinks and drugs are not so harmful as alcohol. Again they will not be so attractive as wines, and their use if found increasing may also be checked side by side in the course of 5 years.

6. Total prohibition will be effective not only in this generation, but it will have far reaching effects on the next and coming generations. There will not be breaches or offences against the law of total prohibition. The present generation will not be without its effect. There will not be as much trouble as we find in the United States of America as Indian opinion is for total prohibition.

7. We believe that the end for the Excise policy to be aimed at is total prohibition and that could be reached by legislation and legislation only.

8. At first the question of distilled liquors and fermented liquors manufactured in India may be taken up for prohibition. Toddy should not be prohibited. Other fermented liquors may be gradually stopped, but for the first five years their supply should not be increased in any case. Meanwhile, the necessary sanction of the Government of India may be obtained to prevent all imports of foreign liquors.

9. In our opinion total prohibition of distilled and fermented country liquors, except toddy, is both possible and necessary. We do not believe that it could be gradually reduced without keeping total prohibition as the goal.

10. We have dealt with (*a*), (*c*), (*d*), (*f*), (*g*) and (*i*) as means of enforcing total prohibition in our answer to question 3.

(*b*) We propose that country liquor should be sold at Rs. 20 a gallon, or at Rs. 3-5-4 a bottle, or at annas 6 and pies 8 a dram. If the policy of running departmental shops be not adopted, vend fee and still duty may be raised proportionately.

(*e*) There are many other pleasant and harmless drinks and eatables and it is no use prolonging the use of alcohol by this means.

(*h*) It may be useful.

(*j*) This may be useful, keeping prohibition as the goal. Otherwise, all temperance movements have not done any tangible good.

We have suggested the departmental working of shops in our answer to question 5 (*d*) and we believe that it would be very useful for revenue purposes and controlling and reducing consumption.

11. This is answered in our answer to question 3, item (1).

12. It may be worked with some effect by municipalities. Local boards have too large an area to work. Again this distribution of work would cost much and very few municipalities would be willing to take it up. These local bodies should be used as advisory boards.

13. There are 90 advisory committees for 29 districts and nearly 200 talukas of the Presidency.

*Table of advisory committees per district.*

| No. of Committees. | | | No. of districts (in each). | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| nil. | in. | .. .. | 4 | .. |
| 1 | ,, | .. .. | 14 | 14 |
| 2 | ,, | .. .. | 2 | 4 |
| 3 | ,, | .. .. | 2 | 6 |
| 7 | ,, | .. .. | 2 | 14 |
| 9 | ,, | .. .. | 2 | 18 |
| 10 | ,, | .. .. | 1 | 10 |
| 12 | ,, | .. .. | 2 | 24 |
| | | | 29 | 90 |

*Country liquor shops closed.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Recommendation of the Collectors .. | 25 | Want of bid .. .. | 1 |
| Do. do. Committees .. | 3 | Total .. .. | 29 |

Ninety Advisory Committees held 49 meetings; fifty-two Committees held no meetings; Bombay and Hyderabad (Sindh) had no meetings but had consultation by circulars.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 52 | Committees had | no | meetings .. .. .. | .. |
| 30 | ,, ,, | one | ,, .. .. .. | 30 |
| 7 | ,, ,, | two | ,, .. .. .. | 14 |
| 1 | ,, ,, | three | ,, .. .. .. | 3 |
| 90 | | | | 47 |

These 47 meetings made 72 recommendations, out of which 57 were wholly and 1 was partly given effect to. These are merely advisory boards to be consulted only when the Collectors desire, as they are their presidents. The Revenue Collector, Assistant Collector of Excise and Superintendent of Police, who are generally *ex-officio* members with presumed superior departmental knowledge and supposed true exponents of Government Excise policy, are found unable to use the unasked for advice of the popular members, and their solicited advice, if disagreeable to the official view, is seldom used. We believe, these Committees, if at all they can be useful, should consist of a popular majority in their constitution, and all their resolutions passed by the majority should be binding on the excise policy of the area concerned. Again in all cases, the president and other popular members should be elected either by the local bodies or directly by the people. Every town and village having one or more liquor shops should have such elected Committees. Their decisions in all excise matters should be final, and every town or village having one or more liquor shops should have such an elected Committee.

14. We have noticed that those who drink do not keep as good health generally as those who are sober and that they are not able to work for all the days of the month. Their output is also less than that of those who do not drink. During the factory holidays, we find that the percentage of crime is higher in industrial centres. The number of accidents in the factories is also greater after the holidays. Again, we notice that the districts, classes or castes, which drink the most have the largest number of criminals from them. We believe that the greater part of crimes, sickness, and less output of work by absence, indifference, and want of stamina would disappear by total prohibition. This would make a saving in public expenditure and increase in production by having less crimes to be dealt with by the police and magistrates; injuries and illness to be treated in less proportion by the hospitals; and the healthy labour will produce more wealth to pay more income-tax.

15. Although we propose total prohibition, it would be that of country liquor only till we get the sanction of the Parliament for the total prohibition of the import of foreign liquor also. Again, total prohibition does not include toddy, medicinal wines, and commercial spirits and hemp drugs; so there would not be a total extinction of the Excise revenue. No doubt, there would be a substantial reduction in it. Again, we have proposed that it should be worked out departmentally by having Government shops, where the liquor should be sold at Rs. 20 per gallon, or at Rs. 3 as. 5 and pies 4 per bottle. This means that the loss in revenue would be as under for the first five years. At the rate of the present consumption the total realisation from the sale of country liquor would be nearly Rs. 5½ crores, at Rs. 20 a gallon, for which nearly 7 lakhs would be the cost of production at about annas 4 per gallon. Deducting 20 per cent. of Government revenue income, and less sale proceeds every year, in proportion to the reduction of sale by rationing of shops to work out total prohibition in 5 years, we have

*Amount in lakhs of rupees.*

| | First year. | Second year. | Third year. | Fourth year. | Fifth year. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Total income from sale of country liquor, including Sindh .. .. | 440 | 330 | 220 | 110 | .. |
| 2. Total income from toddy, fermented liquors, medicated wines, spirits and hemp drugs .. | 113 | 113 | 113 | 113 | 113 |
| Total .. | 553 | 443 | 333 | 223 | 113 |

There may be Rs. 196 lakhs more income in the first 2 years, which would repay the full losses of the 3rd and the 4th years, leaving a surplus of about Rs. 52 lakhs as the cost of liquor and establishments for the shops for the period of 5 years. The permanent losses to be found from the 5th year are to be recouped in 4 years after settling of total prohibition.

These permanent losses, we propose, could be made up not by any new tax or by increasing the rates of existing provincial taxes, as we believe there is much room for retrenchment both in provincial and imperial expenditure. Besides, income equal to the losses of the Excise revenue could be raised by turning gradually all the contracted railways into State ones run by 6 or 7 per cent. fixed interest loans. The item of army expenditure alone can very easily economise up to Rs. 13 crores or more. With these savings or State railways income, the Imperial Government can easily forego Provincial annual contributions. Again, we show below how retrenchment up to nearly Rs. 120 lakhs could be made by doing away with our provincial redundant or duplicate services, services meant for supervision as provincial heads of different departments, which were necessary when the administration was new, when there was difficulty of communication owing to want of facilities of railways, telegraph and telephone. It is really inhuman or shocking to make about 1 to 3 per cent. of population pay Rs. 4¼ crores of revenue and have the benefits of education, police, medicine, justice and general administration. We would rather like to forego all the benefits derived at the cost of these persons. We should make use of all our resources of retrenchments on all sides to give up making any

money from the traffic, which would be really inhuman in the eyes of an Indian with truly national ideals. We believe that about Rs. 25 lakhs would be saved by way of decrease in crime and illness by total prohibition, which will require curtailment in police, hospital, jail and magisterial establishments, owing to less work.

We propose for retrenchments the abolition of the following posts and establishments, as we believe we can do very well without them :—

*Departments, offices and posts for retrenchment.*

| | | Cost in Rs. |
|---|---|---|
| Revenue Commissioners and their offices .. .. | | 5,93,000 |
| Assistant Collectors .. .. | | 6,84,000 |
| Chitnises .. .. | | 32,650 |
| Tobacco Establishment .. .. | | 47,000 |
| Excise contribution to District Local Boards, Bombay Municipality, States, etc. | | 11,57,000 |
| 3 Conservators .. .. | | 74,000 |
| 2 Executive Council Members .. .. | | 1,39,500 |
| Assistant and Deputy Secretaries of the Finance, Revenue, General, Home, Political and Legal Departments of the Secretariat .. .. | | 2,13,225 |
| Deputy Registrars of the High Court .. .. | | 28,000 |
| Judicial Commissioner .. .. | | 2,45,000 |
| Superintendence of Jails .. .. | | 1,55,000 |
| Police : | | |
| Deputy Inspector General of Police .. | 78,440 | |
| Assistant and Deputy Superintendents .. | 4,40,990 | |
| 112 Sergeants .. | 1,13,850 | 50,00,000 |
| Criminal Investigation Department .. | 6,52,000 | |
| | 12,85,280 | |
| and reductions in numbers of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, etc. | | |
| Public Health Department— | | |
| Sanitary Commissioner and Deputies .. .. | | 1,15,000 |
| Sanitary Engineers— | | |
| Total cost 2,33,824 ; half to be retrenched .. | | 1,44,412 |
| Co-operative Department .. .. | | 4,09,000 |
| Deputy Directors of Agriculture, except one for animal breeding | | 56,250 |
| Superintendence of Veterinary .. .. | | 1,55,532 |
| Stationery and Printing .. .. | | 7,00,000 |
| Grants for the pay of Chief and Health Officers, and Sanitary Inspectors of Municipalities .. .. | | 3,24,000 |
| Treasury Accountants and Clerks .. .. | | 15,39,724 |
| Educational Inspectors .. .. | | 1,19,970 |
| | | 1,20,02,263 |

The cost of Revenue and Judicial Commissioners, Deputy Directors of Agriculture, Forest Conservators, Deputy Inspector Generals of Police and Inspectors of Education may be saved, as such provincial heads and their offices are not much needed with so much increase in the means of communication by the expansion of railways, telegraph and telephone, better and trained Indian service and intelligent co-operation of the public by their larger share in administration of local bodies. The several powers of giving sanction may be given to district heads.

The cost of superintendence of jails and veterinary can be dispensed with by leaving this work to the heads of police and agriculture, who can properly look after them. Government printing presses should be closed as they cost about 7 lakhs and their work could be done cheaper by private firms. The Stationery offices should be closed as they cost about a lakh and their work should be done by the Secretariat General Department. Confidential printing should be cyclostyled.

We have shown how about 12 lakhs could be saved, but we believe that from the total cost of Rs. 1,88,22,000 of the Police, about 50 lakhs could be saved. Sergeants could be substituted

by well built and educated Indians and so could be the Superintendents. It would be possible to do away with the posts of Assistant and Deputy Police Superintendents. The cost of the Bombay City Police is Rs. 30 lakhs, out of which a substantial reduction can be made. The number of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors should be reduced. The whole of the Criminal Investigation Department may be done away with, as their work could be done and is done by the ordinary police.

The work of the Sanitary Department can be well entrusted to the Medical Department. Civil surgeons and sub-assistant surgeons can watch and promote vaccination and sanitation work well in the rural and urban areas with little touring charges. The cost of the Sanitary Engineer's Department may be reduced by half.

In connection with the Excise Department, the work of the Tobacco Department may be entrusted to the Excise Staff and the Excise cess contribution will be saved.

Owing to the appointment of 3 Ministers, 2 Executive Council Members may be reduced to effect saving and as their work is reduced.

Assistant and Deputy Secretaries of the several Departments of the Secretariat may be dispensed with and their various powers of giving formal sanction, may be given to the heads of districts or their presidency heads. Similarly, Deputy Registrars of the High Court may be dispensed with. The work of the Co-operative Department may be given to the Agricultural Department which can do it better and without much difficulty. Treasury accountants and clerks may be dispensed with, as each office keep their accounts and they could be checked by only two clerks at the Collector's office, before they are checked by the Accountant General. The work of the Chitnises and Assistant Collectors can be well done by Deputy Collectors and the Head Clerk of the Collectors.

Thus, out of Rs. 3 crores of excise revenue Rs. 1¾ crores could be saved and there would be about one crore of Excise revenue left from revenue charged from articles other than country liquor. Further, Rs. 80 lakhs could be made up partly by halving the present police, judicial and jail expenses and partly by increased taxation to the extent of about 25 lakhs, if further retrenchment to that extent may not be possible.

16. We do not propose to have "Total Prohibition" of opium and hemp drugs. The present restrictions for them may be continued. They might be made more stringent, if they seem to be on an increase.

17. Opium is given to infants and children in villages and by illiterate people in pure form and by towns people in the form of patent medicine, generally known as "bala goli", as soothing medicines, to make the children sleep away the day and night and not disturb their mothers. Smaller doses act as slow-poison and weaken all the nerves and the vitality of the growing children. They succumb to death very easily in epidemics of small-pox, whooping cough, or summer diarhœa. They are easily liable to wasting diseases, adenoids, etc. It also strongly influences heavy mortality of children under five years of age.

All medicines for infants and children, containing opium, should be prohibited by law and it should be made criminal to give opium to children under five years of age.

*P.S.*—Figures in answer to question 2 (*a*) can be considered at the minimum and maximum rates of 16 and 50 drinkers per gallon. Either 3½ or 1½ lakh of drinkers or any number between them is very small and 1 per cent. to 3 per cent. of the total population thus fleeced of Rs. 4¼ crores require grave reflection from administrators and patriotic workers. Our figures, although conjectural, may be said to be approximate.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. N. K. DESAI, Secretary, the Ahmedabad Sanitary Association, replied to the President:—"I have arrived at my figures by taking the number of gallons consumed every year, then dividing it by 365, and then multiplying it by 50 (I assume that 1 gallon is consumed by 50 persons); then I divide the number of population by this and find out the percentage. Then I exclude 20 per cent. of children and 40 per cent. of women and take this drinking number on 40 per cent. of adults likely to drink instead of on 100 persons of entire population. From enquiry at liquor shops, I take it that one dram is consumed by a person once on an average; of course there are persons taking less or much more than that; from casual inquiries from doctors and persons connected with labour I roughly estimate that those who drink remain absent about a day in a week and the hard drinkers remain absent owing to long illness for longer periods. The maximum period is a week a month, and the average is 4 days. It is not easy to find out the exact percentage of those who are absent due to drink. There are many factors to be considered. In Ahmedabad, it may be put down at 10 per cent., but in the case of mill-hands, it would be higher. Our Association had no scientific inquiry in the matter. In a suburb of about 2,500 persons occupied by the workmen of Shet Ambalal Sarabhai, I found that almost all were drinking, excluding women and children, at a shop in the vicinity of the mill. Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai was able to prevail upon the authorities to remove the shop.

"The people of the village of Sarsapur sent an application signed by the headman of each house, through our association to the Collector to remove the shop, but it was not removed. The inhabitants of the street of Choodiole in Ahmedabad sent an application to the Minister to remove the liquor shop there. Nobody was found willing to rent a house for the purpose and the licensee had to purchase, at a high price, a small stable and now the shop is there. If the Department had voted in favour of the removal of the shop, Government would not have come in the way.

"If local option is allowed to be freely exercised by the people having a liquor shop in their midst, an improvement would be effected very soon. Picketing was not successful in Ahmedabad, but the minimum of a gallon that was allowed was purchased by men in bottles and sold outside.

"The instinct of the people is in favour of prohibition, but there are various difficulties in putting it into effect. By propaganda, people can be got to vote for the removal of shops, and this will have considerable effect. Government should fix a limit of time before which prohibition will be put into force, and during the interval local option may be adopted. Prohibition may be completed in 10 or 15 years. I advocate rationing of individuals and shops. During the transitional period, the habitual drinkers may have a stated quantity of liquor.

"I do believe there will be improvement in the output of a mill-hand's work if he stops drinking, and the mill-owners will thereby benefit.

"In order to meet the deficit in revenue, employers of labour may be taxed, as they will benefit by the stoppage of drink. Incomes under Rs. 2,000 may also be taxed. Building site in villages and towns may be taxed."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"If the retail price of liquor in Ahmedabad is raised to Rs. 3-5-4 per bottle, to some extent it will bring misery to the families of the labourers, for some time. However, to those who drink a dram or less it will be less than 2 annas increase per day.

"If toddy is taken fresh and unadulterated, it will not do much harm, and until prohibition is enforced, it may be allowed"

To Dr. Patil :—"The Ahmedabad mill-hands come from the suburbs all round, and some from far away places in Central India. In their native places they do not generally drink, but by association with drinkers, they start drinking themselves. Among the low class women of machhi (fisher women) and other castes, there may be about 1 per cent. of women drinking, but not in other castes. They drink more on holidays and pay days. The bonus they got in the Divali holidays was spent away in this way. In Ahmedabad, there is very little fresh toddy."

To Mr. Madon :—"In the Excise Administration Report, the percentage is given on the total population. From that I worked out the drinking population at the rate of 40 per cent. adults, and from the figures given at page 1 of my written evidence, I have worked out my figure of drinkers per shop.

"When a register of customers is kept in the shop, there is the double advantage of registering the name of the drinking man and preventing him also from coming to the same shop again on the same day. Of course, there is the danger of the same man going to another shop.

"I would like to amend the figure of 4 annas that I have given as the cost of production per gallon. I have not examined the actual figure, but I am told that it is Re. 1, but I will ascertain it later on and send the actual figure. The figure is corrected to annas 8 per gallon in the written statement, which is owing to high price of mhowra at present."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"I do not believe that people will take to foreign liquor if the cost of country liquor per gallon is increased, as I want foreign liquor also to be controlled in price and consumption."

To Dr. Patil :—"I consider that the age limit for non-supply of drink should be 16; that would be enough. I thought this change from 14 years to 16 years was not made by Government and hence a reference was made by me."

No. 80.

REPLIES OF MR. DAHYABHAI BHAGWANDAS MODI, NAGAR FALIA, SURAT.

Though at present I am living in Surat, I have passed nd lived many years in Bhatha, where my father is a landlord, and had many opportunities of studying the Excise policy of Government, and the inclinations of the people at length, and have been able to draw out certain conclusions which I have the honour to lay before your Committee.

My experience relates to country liquor and toddy, and it is upon them that I am trying to dwell in the following brief statement. It may be noted that my experience relates to the district of Surat only.

As an individual, I have been in favour of total prohibition, but my experience in the villages and in the cities, has convinced me that taking people collectively they have never lived, and would never live without intoxicating drugs of one sort or another. No magic can prevent one and all from taking intoxicating drinks. It is not, therefore, worth while for a Government to undertake to make all the country dry, though the idea as it is appears to be noble and beautiful but very impracticable and visionary when put into action.

But I honestly believe that it is the duty of every Government to see that the drink traffic remains within the proper limit; and for the purpose of keeping it on the proper level, Government should keep all possible check on drinks of higher alcoholic strength, by keeping an effective control over such drugs. I for one am of opinion that Government should take immediate steps for preventing the use of liquor, so much so that I would not hesitate in submitting to you that individual licenses should be issued to enable them to buy liquor of particular degree, and the sellers of such liquors should be strictly punished, if they are found selling liquor to persons without license. I know that Government would have to engage a staff for the purpose of issuing these licenses, but I think Government can do so by levying a certain fee for obtaining such licenses.

My views are equally against foreign liquors and I submit that the importation of such liquors should not only be restricted, but should be totally prohibited.

I am also of opinion that while trying this strong policy with regard to drinks of higher alcoholic strength, Government should be very lenient with drinks of lower alcoholic strength so that the drinking class in general might divert their appetite to such mild drinking and might abstain from taking drinks of higher alcoholic strength.

I would recommend toddy as a sort of such lower alcoholic strength.

Toddy unlike liquor does not make permanent injury on the human physique. It only temporarily intoxicates the drinker but nothing beyond it. I find toddy drinkers live long and healthy. Though I am not ready to recommend it as a necessity, I recommend it as a substitute for ruinous drinks.

It is therefore in the fitness of things that Government should try to make it as cheap and unadulterated as possible.

This is only possible by reducing the license fees and the tax on trees, so that it might be cheap and when once made cheap all danger of adulteration is gone.

When once we have drawn people from drinks of higher alcoholic strength it would be worth spending our energy on the effective control of drinks of lower alcoholic strength; therefore I think such gradual moderation would lead us to the desired goal.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MODI replied to the President :—" I have not dealt in liquor myself, but I have been watching in my village how toddy is extracted and sold. I have also been financing persons who deal in toddy and liquor, and I have been staying in the village among the licensees and in a place where toddy is extracted. I have some toddy trees and have seen how they are tapped.

" There is no truth in the complaint that toddy is adulterated in the fields. What is added may be only some sugar and water.

" In our village there are only two shops, one for toddy and another for liquor. Except the Dublas nobody drinks and the shops are kept there for the passers-by, and there are very few customers. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I am in favour of reducing the strength of liquor and also in giving coupons to those who are addicted to stronger liquor. I would apply prohibition only after gradually weaning the people.

" I do believe that smaller license fees and lighter tree tax would help the supply of fresh toddy to the consumers. After the day's sale if there is any toddy remaining in the shop it should be destroyed.

"I employ labour in my fields for agriculture. I pay them 12 annas per day as wages and one anna for their toddy. I find that they work more when they get their toddy. Toddy in villages can be got fresh but not in cities. I have not seen the labourers beating their wives and children after taking toddy. Some may beat. About five per cent. take liquor and they are inefficient labourers."

To Dr. Patil :—"The labourers drink toddy usually in the evening ; they also drink in the afternoon when they take it with their bread."

To Mr. Madon :—"We do not ourselves supply toddy to the labourers. We pay the toddy money to their headman and he supplies them with toddy."

To the President :—"I have to say something about the advisory committees. I consider that the advisory committees should consist of men belonging to the drinking classes. There are exceptions in every class, and there are honourable exceptions even among the drinking class. Those persons will be more useful in laying down rules and in advising Government than lawyers and merchants. I believe that these representatives of the drinking class will exercise their influence towards temperance."

No. 81.

To

The Chairman and Members of the Excise Committee
(Now holding sittings at Surat).

Gentlemen,

We the undersigned toddy licensees of the City of Surat taking advantage of your presence in the city beg to lay the following for your consideration with an earnest hope that you, gentlemen, will be graciously pleased to consider them and pronounce your definite opinion so that much of the difficulties that are now besetting this trade may be avoided.

1. In the first place it is hardly necessary to inform you that the Surat District is known for the production of the best toddy available on this side of India and toddy is the least harmful drug of all alcoholic drinks. This was also recognised by the Government of India in their instructions to the Excise Committee and they declared that it would be a great evil to discourage its use if it could be purchased at the cost of driving people to more deleterious intoxicants and that no consideration of revenue would justify such a course. Again, that Excise Committee after a most careful scientific inquiry arrived at the conclusion that showed that toddy had the lowest alcoholic strength and the highest nutritive value of all the intoxicating liquors which they caused to be examined at Kasauli. The Government of this Province in their Resolution on the Excise Committee's Report lay down the principle of toddy taxation that the duty on toddy should not be raised so high as to prevent a moderate and reasonable consumption by those accustomed to it. Toddy is essentially a drink of the poor and those who use it as drink are mostly the poorest amongst the poor. The class of labourers and working men who can earn higher wages prefer the more intoxicating liquor to toddy. It would therefore be unwise to place any harsh restriction on the use of toddy as drink.

2. We are in this trade from our infancy and we are in a position to assure you, Sirs, that toddy is a nourishment to the poor after their daily toil and often serves as a food to them. It is after all the pure juice of a tree drawn direct from the tree and as such possesses many nutritive and medicinal qualities. Many of the doctors who know the advantages of this beverage often advise their patients to make a moderate use of toddy on many diseases, more especially diseases of the lever, etc., and toddy is proved to be a very good washer of many impurities in the human system. Every drink when taken in excess would be harmful but because a few indulge in excess and become bad citizens, it is no reason why thousands of people who make moderate use of them should be deprived of their daily cheap and luxuriant drink.

3. To make the country dry all at once at one stroke of pen or a Government Resolution or any Act will prove to be a physical impossibility and would drive those accustomed to alcohol either to more harmful intoxicants which can easily be concealed, or to illicit distillation. The remedy in that case will be worse than evil and people, instead of improving, will degenerate into more harmful habits.

4. Those who are addicted to alcoholic drinks cannot leave off the habit at once unless by degrees their attention is drawn to the evils of alcohol and the disadvantages are brought home to their hearts. Unless such radical change comes over the hearts of the drinkers any amount of resolutions or restrictions would be of no avail and every effort at restriction by Government will drive them in the wrong direction.

5. We may, therefore, strongly and emphatically and with all the force that we could command urge that total prohibition at once will be an impossibility and in order to induce people to leave off the habit of taking strong alcoholic drinks such as country liquor, etc., they should be drawn to this least harmful drink of toddy and every effort should be made to make this stuff cheap and unadulterated, and in order to secure these advantages it is the bounden duty of Government to remove the manifold restrictions that are being laid on toddy from year to year and to reduce the tree-tax and license-fee to such a degree that the licensees can afford to sell the stuff cheap and unadulterated to the consumers. This is the only way in which toddy can be made cheap and pure.

6. Government have been changing their system so often from year to year by way of experiment that even with the lapse of decades of years, they have not settled a definite policy which may become beneficial to the poor classes and we earnestly request you, gentlemen, to apply your mind very closely to this most nutritious and least harmful drink and make your recommendations to Government to make toddy as cheap as possible.

7. In order to enable you to make recommendations we need not repeat the history of the toddy shops of the City of Surat and the various changes made from time to time in the disposal of the shops. Suffice it will be for us to state that—

Firstly—the practice was to tax a certain fee for each tree tapped at individual shops and license for selling toddy at the shop was put to auction to be given to the highest bidder;

*Secondly*—then came the fixed fee system by which the old licensee was given the new license and license-fee determined from the number of trees tapped for his shop in the previous years—tree-tax for each tree tapped remaining the same ;

*Thirdly*—and lastly the present system introduced of asking for tenders for the number of trees tapped for each shop and the amount of tax the tenderer is willing to offer for every such tree agreed to be tapped, and compelling licensees to take a particular number of trees.

8. It will not be out of place if we state that the second system was the best and it worked very well both for the licensee and the general public, and even to Government. You, gentlemen, know very well that the toddy trade is different from the liquor business. A licensee of the liquor shop—if he gets a shop—has merely to buy ready made distilled liquor from the distillery, has to open a shop and the sale at his shop begins ; thus he starts his business at a moment's notice without any previous preparations. The case is different with the licensee of the toddy shop for he must be ready with his trees, his tapping Tarwadas, his rolling stock before be could continue his toddy shop. His duties are multifarious as the law casts all responsibility on the shoulders of the licensee himself. He has to look after the numbering of trees, then the tapping of the trees, he has to see that his men in the field do not sell or contravene any Abkari rule or law ; he has to see toddy taken to his shop and he has further to see that his shop is out and out conducted in due obedience to all the Abkari rules and regulations. Thus, his duties and responsibilities are multifarious and more arduous than those of a liquor shop licensee. The latter can afford to tender for the liquor shop and run his shop but with the former with all preparations that he has to make the tender system is most injurious.

9. In our profession unfortunately there are many enemies of ours who often harass us by making bogus offers and often try to snatch away shops from us. This was also a havoc to the open auction system and these difficulties were often and often pointed out to the Collectors and Commissioners who after mature deliberations admitted the force of our arguments and had introduced the fixed fee system and it had worked very well.

10. The policy of Government is changing and no licensee is sure which system will be taken up next year. He therefore prepares himself beforehand ; keeps a large number of trees by purchasing them or leasing them on long leases ; he has to engage tappers by paying them rupees in advance—for nowadays there is dearth of good tappers and every licensee becomes anxious to secure best tappers—he has to keep cart-bullocks, drivers, labourers all ready and he has to invest a large capital in these items. Now if such a licensee loses his shop, he is a ruined man and all his invested capital goes to waste, and under such circumstances, it is not quite unnatural that he will be anxious to see that he retains the shop and by degrees realises some profit out of his invested capital. In the tender system he gets more nervous ; he knows he has many enemies to combat with. He knows his limit and if he therefore adheres to his limit and gives a tender up to that limit, another man if his tender is higher—even a little higher—gets in and the poor old licensee is, at one stroke, a fallen and a ruined man ; all his invested capital in trees, tappers, conveyances, labourers, etc., all become dead capital. The tappers leave him and will not return the advance money and thus to save his invested capital he would rather be anxious to give the highest bids than circumstances can afford, so that by that he may outbid any other tenderer and at least retain the shop to himself and keep his business running. Further every licensee has his sowcar money-lender, and he borrows money for them, and as long as the business continues he is paid daily and he remains quiet, but the moment the shop is gone he naturally becomes anxious for his money and the licensee, not being able to pay at once, gets deeper into the mire. He has either to sell away his immoveable properties or give them in heavy mortgage and the shop being gone no interest could be paid ; it accumulates and ultimately he has to see his property all sinking in debt and gone into his sowcar's hands.

11. The object of Government could not be to draw revenue by ruining the licensees and compelling them to have recourse to illegal practices. The object of Government ought to be to make toddy cheap and unadulterated and to draw revenue from this trade leaving the poor licensee also a chance to eke out his existence and maintain his family. It is therefore very respectfully and humbly suggested that the fixed fee system will be the only system which will safeguard the interest of all concerned, Government licensees and toddy consumers.

12. The present system of compelling the licensee to take as large a number of trees as possible is also not consistent with the declared policy of Government, because when a licensee is compelled to tap a very large number of trees far above the average consumption of his shop, he has per force to make toddy cheap and thereby unnecessary impetus is given to the people to drink more than otherwise they would do.

13. From the above you will be pleased to see that to make toddy cheap and unadulterated, every facility ought to be given to the licensee to enable him to sell toddy unadulterated and the only way to do so is to fix a certain fee on every tree tapped by them and such fee may be so fixed as to leave them a margin also.

14. On the whole, therefore, we pray that your Committee will be pleased to go through the question of toddy and will be pleased to make your recommendations to Government to so regulate their policy that people may be protected from the harmful effects of stronger alcoholic drink and toddy be made available to the people cheap and unadulterated.

We beg to remain,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient servants,
HORMUSJI CAWASJI
and 7 others.

Surat, 20th April 1923.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. HORMUSJI CAWASJI replied to Mr. Madon :—" We are of opinion that there should be no licenses for tappers, as they sometimes leave abruptly and it is very difficult to get out new licenses. As the licensed shopkeepers are affected they can be trusted to keep watch that no unauthorised tappers are allowed to tap. It is also not necessary that the servants employed in selling toddy should get out licenses.

" We are not allowed to sell more than four gallons to one man. In case a person arrives with a marriage party or so, then we have to go to the licensing officer to get a special permit to sell more to that man. Though a licensee can sell 4 gallons to each one of the party individually, if a person does not say that he belongs to that party, legally we cannot sell to him. An ordinary working class man can stand three to four pints : a strong man can stand about a gallon and a half of toddy.

" As now Government levies a tax on the trees tapped, it should be easy for Government to calculate the quantity of toddy taken out in each locality, and it is unnecessary to ask us to keep a register of toddy received and sold from day to day.

" The average yield per tree per year is 28 to 32 gallons of toddy.

" Government accepted that to be a fair yield, and began to levy a fixed fee from the toddy licensees on that basis. That was a better system and people got better toddy.

" The present system of asking us to tender for the number of trees that we would tap in a year is injurious. Thereby a large quantity of toddy remains on our hands, which we are asked to destroy without any compensation being paid to us. In former times, there was no such restriction, and there was no complaint of adulteration."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" The present system may lead us to try to sell more toddy to our customers, or to find out new customers for it. Twenty (forty) years back, one had only to pay 8 annas per tree, and sell toddy anywhere he pleased."

To Mr. Madon :—" Toddy can be sold for 8 to 9 annas per gallon, and a tree brings us an income of Rs. 15 to 17. About 4 or 5 years ago, we sent a representation to Government that they themselves had accepted that Rs. 10 per tree was a reasonable charge for tapping and bringing the toddy to the shop. The cost of tapping has now doubled, and unless the tree-tax is reduced we are perforce obliged to resort to adulteration. It is difficult to distinguish adulterated from pure toddy.

" We are of opinion that men interested in the toddy trade should also be represented on the advisory committees. Drinking toddy and liquor one after the other is likely to be injurious. A man takes about an hour and a half before he finishes his drink of a bottle of toddy at the shop. The toddy licensees do not usually keep any eatables in their shops, but other people do so close by.

" It is not necessary to have such a large excise staff for controlling the toddy trade.

" In the cold season the toddy is so sweet that people do not take it unless it is fermented in the sun, as it causes cold, diarrhœa, etc.

" It is not true that dirty water is put into the pots for purposes of adulteration.

" *Puris* and *bhajias* are sold close to toddy shops."

---

Returned with compliments.

The evidence given is correctly recorded except that instead of the words " twenty years back " there should be " forty years back ". We further would like to make the following suggestion :—

1. That auction should be held in June so that we may have sufficient time to prepare the tree for tapping so as to give yield of toddy from the commencement of the term.

2. According to paragraph 6 of Government Resolution No. C.-294, dated 27th May 1921, every year we are applying to the Collector of Surat for carrying out the orders contained in the said order *re* : the disposal of shop licenses to be completed in June but as yet nothing has been done in that direction.

3. Government have issued instructions in their order No. C.-294 of 27th May 1921 that privileged shops shall not be charged a higher tree-rate than that paid by the tender shops which compete with them. But strange to say that privileged shops are charged higher tree-rate than that paid by the tender shops. In this respect also we are drawing the attention of the Collector Saheb every year but he does not heed to our request.

4. The date-trees of the taluka are registered by Government and the yield of toddy has been accepted by Government to be 28 to 32 gallons. So it is to be looked into that no one can tap more trees clandestinely, and other obstacles should be removed so that there will be no difficulty in our business.

HORMASJI CAWASJI.

Surat, 30th April 1923.

---

*Statement handed over by Mr. Hormasji Cawasji at his oral evidence.*

Surat City, 1920-1921.

| Place. | Name. | Number of date-trees. | Amount. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Rs. |
| Bangdivad .. .. | Kekhashru Manekji .. .. .. | 1,400 | 9,900 |
| Begumpura .. .. | Dinsha Nanabhai .. .. .. | 1,100 | 9,000 |
| Dabgarvad No. 2 .. .. | Rustamji Edalji .. .. .. | 1,000 | 8,000 |
| Delhi Gate No. 1 .. .. | Nassurvanji Bhikaji .. .. .. | 1,125 | 7,875 |
| Delhi Gate No. 2 .. .. | Naran Morar .. .. .. | 1,600 | 14,400 |
| Galemandi .. .. | Dittabhai Vishram .. .. .. | 1,100 | 8,800 |
| Dhastipura .. .. | Naoroji Barjorji .. .. .. | 1,200 | 10,800 |
| Haripura No. 2 .. .. | Hormasji Merwanji and Soma Kanji .. .. | 1,500 | 900 |
| Zampa Bazar No. 1 .. .. | Haribhai Naran and Kanji Fakira .. .. | 1,300 | 11,050 |
| ,, ,, No. 3 .. | Naoroji Nassurvanji .. .. .. | 1,000 | 7,000 |
| ,, ,, No. 4 .. | Darasha Behramji Patel .. .. .. | 1,200 | 9,600 |
| ,, ,, No. 6 .. | Ardesar Manekji .. .. .. | 1,700 | 13,600 |
| ,, ,, No. 7 .. | Kekhashru Kavashji .. .. .. | 2,400 | 9,600 |
| ,, ,, No. 8 .. | Maneksha Barjorji .. .. .. | 1,200 | 9,600 |
| ,, ,, No. 9 .. | Shapurji Kavashji .. .. .. | 1,700 | 15,300 |
| ,, ,, No. 10 .. | Dhanjibhai Rustamji .. .. .. | 1,400 | 9,800 |
| ,, ,, No. 12 .. | Barjorji Nasurvanji .. .. .. | 1,200 | 10,800 |
| Kotsafil No. 18 .. .. | Pirojsha Nasurvanji .. .. .. | 1,300 | 11,700 |
| Lal Darvaja .. .. | Narotam Parshotam .. .. .. | 1,300 | 12,025 |
| Malek's Vadi .. .. | Hormasji Kharshedji .. .. .. | 800 | 6,400 |
| Nanpura Junaphad No. 1 .. | Nanabhai Rustomji .. .. .. | 1,100 | 8,800 |
| ,, Junaphad No. 2 .. | Dinsha Nasurvanji .. .. .. | 950 | 6,650 |
| ,, Kantha Gali No. 1 .. | Hormasji Kharshedji .. .. .. | 1,400 | 11,200 |
| ,, ,, No. 2 .. | Hormasji Kunverji and Edalji Beramji .. .. | 1,000 | 9,000 |
| ,, Timaliyavad .. | Barjorji Bhikhaji .. .. .. | 1,000 | 8,500 |
| Navsari Bhaji Bazar No. 1 .. | Nasurvanji Hormasji .. .. .. | 1,150 | 10,350 |
| Navsari Machhi Bazar No. 2 .. | Vithaldas Kanjibhai .. .. .. | 1,700 | 14,450 |
| Navsari Morcho .. .. | Parbhu Ratanji .. .. .. | 1,500 | 13,500 |
| Sagrampura .. .. | Bhana Jogi .. .. .. | 1,100 | 8,800 |
| Sahra Gate .. .. | Lalbhai Nathubhai .. .. .. | 1,200 | 10,800 |
| Salabatpura .. .. | Merwanji Barjorji .. .. .. | 1,200 | 9,600 |
| Sayedpuri Bhagol .. .. | Dinsha Edalji .. .. .. | 1,225 | 11,025 |
| Variavi Bhagol No. 1 .. | Koya Chhiba and Chhagan Soma .. .. | 1,200 | 9,900 |
| ,, ,, No. 3 .. | Jehangirji Merwanji .. .. .. | 900 | 7,200 |
| | *Privilege Shops.* | | |
| Budelavad .. .. | Manekji Adarji .. .. .. | 1,500 | 12,000 |
| Dafagarvad No. 1 .. .. | Mancherji Hirjibhai .. .. .. | 500 | 4,000 |
| Haripura Kanskivad No. 1 .. | Hari Harkha .. .. .. | 1,100 | 8,800 |
| Mulla Chakla .. .. | Kharshedji Jamshedji .. .. .. | 350 | 2,800 |
| Navsari Bhaji Bazar No. 2 .. | Kanji Parshotam .. .. .. | 1,600 | 12,800 |
| ,, Machhi Bazar No. 1 .. | Hormasji Kunverji .. .. .. | 1,150 | 9,200 |
| Variavi Bhagol No. 2 .. | Nasurvanji Mervanji .. .. .. | 950 | 7,600 |
| Zampa Bazar No. 2 .. .. | Kershadji Nanabhai .. .. .. | 750 | 6,000 |

No. 82.

*REPLIES OF Mr. MANILAL GANDHABHAI, MAMLATDAR, CHORASI, ON BAHALF OF THE EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CHORASI, SURAT DISTRICT.

1. Government service and agriculture. General experience in life.

2-3. Minimise temptation tc drink—advisable.

No other suggestions.

4. No.

5. (*a*) Offences of illicit distillation can be detected by the Excise as well as Police officers.

(*b*) Bordering Indian States may be induced to keep equal rates of sale.

(*c*) and (*e*) This can be checked by establishing temperance associations consisting of leading persons of all communities.

(*d*) Investment of additional powers in village police patels and the District Police would save the necessity for maintaining a preventive establishment.

6. Young children always follow the habits of their parents in 99 out of 100 cases.

7. Complete cessation is absolutely impossible as well as not desirable. Partial cessation can be achieved by legislation combined with organisation of temperance associations.

8. Prohibition of the use of toddy or shindi is not desirable as it is not injurious.

9-10. Absolute prohibition is not feasible nor desirable. Gradual control of consumption can be effected by :—

(*a*) Rationing of shops.

(*b*) Increasing the price of liquor.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops.

(*d*) Reduction of days is not desirable in that the customers would like to take double the quantity on the succeeding day. The shops may be allowed to be kept open till the twilight instead of 8 p.m. as many high class habitual drinkers visit the shops after the twilight.

(*e*) Reduction of strength of liquor is advisable, provided the rationing of shops is put into force.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops.

(*g*) Foreign liquor is commonly used by well-to-do and middle classes. This can be checked only by imposition of an extraordinary import duty.

(*h*) and (*k*) Prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops. Restriction will result in very mild effect.

(*i*) Liquor should not be sold to persons under 18.

(*j*) Encouraging temperance work by subsidising temperance associations. Under no circumstances special permits should be granted.

11-12. I am in favour of investing the powers of determining the number of shops and the location thereof in the city municipalities and district local boards and not in town municipalities and taluka local boards. It is not possible to ask them to raise any revenue in place of the loss that may be incurred by the exercise of such powers.

13. No (so far as my experience goes). Temperance associations may be established in every taluka.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to an increase in crime, but it has little effect on the output of work.

15. Taxation has reached its maximum and it is not desirable to impose any fresh tax as it would tend to increase the discontent among the public. The undersigned is unable to suggest any new source from which the loss of revenue can be met.

16. No.

17. The custom of giving opium is not commonly prevalent. Pills made of spices mixed with a very little quantity of opium are occasionally given to children under 1 year to give them a lull. It is generally prevalent amongst 25 per cent. of the middle classes only, without any result affecting the mortality of children.

* This witness did not attend for oral examination.

No. 83.

* Replies of the Broach Excise Committee.

The meeting of the local Excise Advisory Committee, Broach, which was specially called to consider these questions, was attended by the following gentlemen :—

1. Mr. H. L. Fox, Collector of Broach.
2. Mr. M. S. Jayakar, District Deputy Collector, Broach.
3. Khan Bahadur Burjorji S. Munsiff, medical practitioner and Vice-President, Broach City Municipality.
4. Sardar Pirsaheb Amirsaheb, Member, Broach City Municipality, and Inamdar of an alienated village.
5. Mr. Mohanlal Girdharlal, Member, Broach City Municipality, and land-holder.
6. Mr. Hormasji M. Dungaji, Member, Broach City Municipality, and owner of a ginning factory.

*Question.* *Reply.*

1. The profession of each of the members present has been shown above against his name. None of the members have had any special opportunities of forming an opinion on the questions indicated below, but they base their opinion on the general experience of the drinking classes with whom they sometimes come into contact in the course of their ordinary business.

2. (*a*) All the members are of the unanimous opinion that the policy is suited to the present circumstances.

(*b*) All the members, except Mr. Jayakar, are of opinion that there is an improvement in intemperance, but it cannot be said with certainty that the present policy is responsible for it. All the members unanimously agree that this policy has put no effective check on intemperance.

3. Mr. Jayakar suggests that in cases of drunkenness the licensee who supplied the drink, even if the liquor is consumed off the premises, should be penalised departmentally, while the other members suggest that a licensee who supplies for consumption on or off his licensed premises to a person who shows signs of intoxication should be punished departmentally and in extreme cases, magisterially.

Messrs. Jayakar and Dungaji further suggested that Government should encourage temperance drink places, but the suggestion was not supported by the other members of the committee.

4. All the members agree unanimously that it is impracticable to carry out a policy which would effect total prohibition.

5. The members are unable to give any opinion on this question.

6. The members are of the opinion that the argument is poor.

7. Messrs. Jayakar, Mohanlal and Hormasji are of the opinion that the end to be aimed at, if it were feasible, would be the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic drink, while the Collector, Khan Bahadur Burjorji and Sardar Pirsaheb consider that the end to be aimed at should be the cessation of consumption in excess.

The members are of opinion that, in addition to legislation, means should be adopted to achieve the end through education and temperance associations, etc.

8. Three members are in favour of applying the principle of prohibition to all sorts of liquor ; two members are against applying the principle of prohibition to any sort of liquor; one member is against distilled liquor but in favour of fermented liquor.

9. The members are unable to suggest measures for controlling consumption, in addition to those contained in question No. 10.

10. *Rationing.*—No suggestion to make.

*Reducing the numbers of shops.*—No definite scale.

*Reducing the hours of sale.*—It is suggested, country liquor shops in industrial neighbourhoods should be closed for 2 or 3 additional hours on the days on which the prevailing industry remains closed. As for the closing of foreign liquor shops in the industrial neighbourhoods on such occasions, the members are equally divided in opinion.

*Prescribing age limit.*—Carried by majority that the age limit should be raised to 17 years.

The members have nothing to suggest with regard to the remaining means, except that temperance should be taught in schools.

11. Mr. Jayakar suggests that local area should be given the power of exercising local option for prohibition, provided it does not clash with Government interest.

* Mr. M. S. Jayakar, who was invited on behalf of the Broach Excise Committee, did not appear for oral examination.

Messrs. Burjorji, Mohanlal, Pirsaheb and Dungaji are in favour of giving the power but do not wish to attach the condition proposed by Mr. Jayakar.

The Collector is against the grant of power. Mr. Hormasji Dungaji left the meeting at this stage.

All the members are in favour of local option allowing local area to make rules for regulating the number of shops, hours of sale within certain limits prescribed by legislation. The members do not want to make any definite suggestion.

12. All members are against investing local authorities with the power of deciding the number and location of shops. They are of opinion that the power should remain with the present Excise Advisory Committee.

13. The general opinion is that these committees can be made useful but that this is not always done.

All members agree unanimously that no change in the present constitution of the committee should be made.

14. All the members agree that the evil of drink contributes to an increase in crime. It also tends to reduce industrial output.

15. None of the members have any suggestion to make as to how the income should be replaced.

16. All the members say that they have no special remarks to make as Government is doing all that is necessary in the matter.

17. All the members say that the habit is prevalent among the lower classes of giving opium to young children. They are unable to offer any opinion regarding the effect of this on the death rate among children.

No. 84

* Replies of the President, Nandurbar Municipality, West Khandesh.

2. (*a*) The excise policy laid down by the Government of India does not seem to be suitable to the purpose for which it was intended.

(*b*) The results of the policy are meagre and it has almost failed to put much check on intemperance.

3. Please see the answer to question No. 10.

4. Total prohibition is much to be desired on social and economic grounds, but it does not seem to be practicable, at least under the present circumstances. Steps should, however, be taken to educate the people and to bring home to them the disadvantages of the habit of drinking.

5. If the sale of liquor is stopped immediately, there is no doubt much risk of illicit distillation. It may, however, be observed that, unless the preventive staff is altogether dishonest such distillation cannot take place in plain localities where there are no natural facilities for concealment, such as valleys, hillocks, etc., and the quantity thus distilled would be very small as compared with what could be obtained from shops. In Indian States also attempts are being made to check the habit. Among certain castes or certain religious occasions home distilled liquor is supposed to be necessary. And on such occasions they prepare such liquor inspite of risks of detection. It is not possible to change this custom by legislation. People should be made to understand gradually that the belief on which the custom is based is erroneous and not supported by any religious precepts.

6. If children get lessons of temperance from their infancy there is a great probability of vast reduction in the habit of drinking.

7. Before undertaking legislation attempts should be made to bring home the evils of drinking by providing every school, village, *chaudi* and such other public places with charts showing the effect of drinking on constitution and morals, by giving instructions on the subject with the aid of magic lanterns, and by adopting similar other methods.

8. There is some difference of opinion on this subject, but it is generally believed that fresh and unfermented toddy or shindi is not so injurious as other liquors.

9 and 10. In addition to the means enumerated in question 10, the shops should be closed on market days and holidays. They should also be away from mills and factories, and should be closed on payment days. The quantity of liquor that could be removed without permission should be restricted to one bottle.

11. The principle of local option is desirable. Leaders of all communities of the place should be consulted.

12. The local bodies should be invested with powers to determine the number and location of shops within their limits, and they should not be called upon to make up the deficiency that might be due to a falling off in the consumption.

13. This board thinks that the existing advisory committees have not proved to be useful. Its members should be elected.

14. The evil of drink contributes to an increase of crime ; sometimes crimes are committed with a view to get money to enable drinking. The output of work also is thereby affected injuriously.

15. The administration is top heavy and there is much scope of retrenchment in that direction.

* This witness did not attend for oral examination.

# AHMEDABAD WITNESSES.

## No. 85.

REPLIES OF MR. S. H. COVERNTON, I.C.S., COLLECTOR OF KAIRA.

1. I. C. S. No special opportunities since I have had little experience as a Collector and in previous appointments have not been much in touch with the liquor question.

3. I do not suggest any change in the Excise policy of Government as stated in the Government of India's Resolution quoted.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition, apart from other reasons I consider it quite impracticable, except by the maintenance of an enormous preventive establishment which would be exceedingly costly and would provide unlimited opportunities for corruption. Prohibition without effective methods of prevention would merely result in the law being ignored or evaded and in widespread illicit manufacture and sale of liquor. I have had no personal knowledge of any area where prohibition was in force, except very brief visits some time back to the small and very thinly populated tracts, *i.e.*, the " King Country " in the North Island of New Zealand (in which, however, I saw 2 cases of drunkenness in a few hours' visit) and Banff in Canada. Neither of these, of course, presents any analogy to the question as it exists in a thickly populated country like Gujarat where the means of illicit distillation are readily at hand everywhere. How far prohibition is successful in the United States I do not know, but I understand it owes such success as it has to the fact that public opinion is overwhelmingly in its favour and that there are numerous unofficial and unpaid agencies who assist the efforts of the Excise authorities. Here public opinion (except among a limited class) is not yet ready for the movement and I do not think any material assistance from non-officials could be expected. I do not agree with the Superintendent's opinion that a multiplication of shops would lead to greater temperance.

5. This question does not arise. But I may remark that liquor could very easily be obtained illicitly from the sources suggested and others, that in most parts of this district any one who did not wish to run the risk of illicit distillation would find a shop in an Indian State at no great distance where liquor could be obtained and that it is possible that some classes might take to other intoxicants instead.

7. The only means of securing the cessation of consumption of liquor lies in temperance propaganda.

10. Of the methods suggested (*d*) is just about to be tried as an experiment.

(*b*) would undoubtedly help if done gradually but there would still remain the probability that in districts where liquor can easily be made illicitly it would encourage illicit manufacture. It would in any case only be effective in this district if the neighbouring States raised their prices to correspond.

(*c*) This would be of little effect by itself ; so long as purchase for consumption off the premises is allowed, and so long as there are State shops nearby. Moreover, it would also lead to illicit distillation.

(*e*) If this were done gradually it should have good results.

(*f*) The term is rather vague but evidently it is undesirable to allow shops in places where they are likely to offer undue temptations.

(*g*) I cannot see that by itself this would have any effect except among classes which consume only foreign liquor. But some sort of restriction would seem necessary in the cheaper forms of foreign liquor where country liquor is restricted.

(*h*) I don't understand this suggestion.

(*i*) The age is already limited and this should not be relaxed.

(*j*) Such societies are desirable but it should not be necessary to subsidise them.

(*k*) I am doubtful whether the prohibition of removal of liquor from licensed premises for consumption is practicable unless the number of such premises is very greatly increased and in that case the advantage to the cause of temperance is doubtful. The amount of liquor that can be removed is already restricted, but of course such restrictions can be evaded and probably are.

13. I have had little experience of such committees. They are just being started in this district.

15. I can make no suggestions and it would appear that this question is insoluble.

16. It appears to me that the necessity of restricting hemp drugs and opium is at least as great as that of restricting liquor. Prohibition in their case would be much easier to enforce than in the case of liquor ; but the objection to it is the danger that it would encourage illicit use of cocaine and other similar drugs.

Mr. COVERNTON replied to the President:—"I would not advocate participation by excise officials in temperance propaganda, because propaganda is very much more effective if it comes from non-officials, and also because it might suggest a certain amount of compulsion on the part of Government. Moreover, so far as the mamlatdars and the revenue officials are concerned, they have hardly any time to devote to temperance propaganda, and if temperance propaganda is thrown on them as part of their work it would seriously interfere with their ordinary magisterial and revenue work. I am not aware that there is any complaint at present that Government want to encourage drink for the sake of revenue, but if there is I do not see much to choose between the evil involved in that complaint and the evil which would be involved in the other idea that Government want to prohibit drink by compulsion.

"The only method I would suggest for attaining temperance is propaganda. I consider that prohibition is not a practical measure because to be really effective an enormous amount of staff should be appointed to prevent and detect illicit distillation and smuggling, and the daily interference with the populace, which the work of prevention and detection would mean, would be resented seriously.

"I am not aware that the majority of people who go to the drink shop feel it a shame to go there.

"I have not considered the question of how local option should be ascertained. I cannot, therefore, say whether it would be right to ascertain it by a referendum.

"As a mere matter of practice there would be no mechanical difficulty in entrusting local bodies with the power of locating and removing liquor shops, but I have not considered the question whether such a step would be administratively advisable. I have not had much experience of excise advisory committees, but it seems to me that if the committee is largely elected there might be difficulty in practical working owing to intrusion of local politics."

*Q.* If 70 per cent. of the people of a certain area vote in favour of removing a shop from that locality, do you think that can be adopted as a practical measure? *A.* It is rather hard to say. It will depend on the kind of district. It would be a practical measure only if the 70 per cent. would not consider only their own interest, but would also take into consideration such questions as the possibility of illicit distillation or smuggling from bordering States.

*Q.* If the people by a majority decide not to have a shop, could they not be trusted to give information about illicit distillation? *A.* Taking the analogy of dacoities, I do not think that people would be ready to give information. Such failure might be due to terrorism as in the case of dacoities, *i.e.*, people might be afraid to give such information and they would in any case be reluctant to incriminate others. I have no experience about liquor contractors devising means to nullify the effects of temperance preaching.

To Mr. Madon:—"The number of cases of illicit distillation in 1916-17 was 281, but in 1917-18 it dropped to 88, in spite of there being a rise in revenue. This was due to the fact that the Act regarding possession of mhowra flowers came into operation at that time. There were 1,502 cases of illicit possession of mhowra flowers during 1917-18."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol:—"I have stated that public opinion here (except among a limited class) is not yet ready for the movement, but I cannot offer any evidence for my statement. I do not know that the drinking classes themselves would vote in favour of prohibition if a vote were taken among them. Perhaps it would be easy to obtain a vote for mere prohibition among them; but if they understood what would be involved in effective prohibition and they also knew what preventive measures would have to be taken, I do not think that they would vote in a majority in favour of effective prohibition. That is to say, I do not think they would vote for the steps necessary to prevent effectively all consumption, possession, or manufacture of liquor; though they might perhaps vote for the mere closing of the liquor shops if they thought illicit consumption would still not be rendered impossible.

"*A priori* in a district where illicit distillation was difficult in itself, and where there were no adjoining Indian States or other places from which liquor could be imported, there would be a much stronger case for local option (assuming that absolute prohibition is really permissible and not an interference with individual liberty), and it could be tried in such a district with much more success than elsewhere.

"In the smaller municipalities I doubt very much how far the decisions of the managing body reflect real public opinion.

"I do not think I am able to express an opinion on the licensing boards now being tried in the United Provinces. In each of the municipalities of the district there are only one or two liquor shops. Therefore it would be useless to empower the licensing boards to reduce the number of shops to one-third as in the United Provinces. I have no experience of big municipalities like Surat and Ahmedabad."

*Statement I* produced by Mr. Covernton showing figures of consumption of country liquor in the town of Nadiad of the Kaira District for the last 10 years (beginning from the year 1912-13).*

| Year. | 25° U.P. Gallons. | 30° U.P. Gallons. | 40° U.P. Gallons. | 60° U.P. Gallons. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1912-13 .. .. | 6,386 | .... | .... | .... | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 7,485 | .... | .... | .... | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 8,061 | .... | .... | .... | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 4,579 | .... | 4,241 | .... | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 5,301 | .... | 4,639 | .... | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 7,494 | .... | 5,075 | .... | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .... | 3,668 | 8,625 | .... | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .... | 2,215 | 9,053 | .... | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .... | 2,358 | 6,437 | .... | |
| 1921-22 .. .. | .... | 2,439 | 4,775 | .... | |

* For figures of consumption of country liquor in the Kaira District see statement printed after evidence No. 76.

*Statement II produced by Mr. Covernton showing figures of consumption of country liquor in the Anand Town† of the Kaira District for the last 10 years (beginning from the year 1912-13).*

| Year. | 25° U.P. Gallons. | 30° U.P. Gallons. | 40° U.P. Gallons. | 60° U.P. Gallons. | Rrmarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1912-13 .. .. | 2,442 | .... | .... | 1 | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 2,562 | .... | 13 | 3 | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 2,442 | .... | 2,290 | .... | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 1,562 | .... | 2,597 | .... | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 1,724 | .... | 3,729 | .... | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 2,193 | .... | 4,992 | .... | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .... | 1,485 | 3,521 | .... | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .... | 1,535 | 3,235 | .... | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .... | 1,029 | 2,144 | .... | |
| 1921-22 .. .. | .... | 1,540 | 2,150 | .... | |

†Including both the town shop and the station shop. The latter serves persons resident on the suburb near the station and also the numerous railway passengers arriving and departing.

*Statement III produced by Mr. Covernton showing figures of consumption of country liquor in the town of Umreth of the Anand Taluka, Kaira District, for the last 10 years (beginning from the year 1912-13).*

| Year. | 25° U.P. Gallons. | 30° U. P. Gallons. | 40° U.P. Gallons. | 60° U.P. Gallons. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1912-13 .. .. | 1,474 | .... | 19 | .... | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 1,483 | .... | 9 | 1 | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 1,772 | .... | 36 | 2 | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 1,752 | .... | 349 | .... | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 1,918 | .... | 140 | .... | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 2,435 | .... | 476 | .... | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .... | 737 | 1,762 | .... | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .... | 817 | 1,971 | .... | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .... | 629 | 1,524 | .... | |
| 1921-22 .. .. | .... | 667 | 636 | .... | |

*Statement IV produced by Mr. Covernton showing figures of consumption of country liquor in the Town of Borsad of the Kaira District for the last 10 years (beginning from the year 1912-13).*

| Year. | 25° U.P. Gallons. | 30° U.P. Gallons. | 40° U.P. Gallons. | 60° U.P. Gallons. | Rrmarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1912-13 .. .. | 2,057 | .... | .... | .... | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 2,019 | .... | .... | .... | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 2,192 | .... | .... | 15 | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 1,823 | .... | 319 | .... | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 2,004 | .... | 321 | .... | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 2,584 | .... | 198 | .... | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .... | 2,270 | 8 | .... | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .... | 1,648 | 401 | .... | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .... | 1,443 | 333 | .... | |
| 1921-22 .. .. | .... | 1,373 | 44 | .... | |

*Statement V produced by Mr. Covernton showing figures of consumption of country liquor in the Town of Kapadvanj of the Kaira District for the last 10 years (beginning from the year 1912-13).*

| Year. | 25° U. P. Gallons. | 30° U. P. Gallons. | 40° U. P. Gallons. | 60° U. P. Gallons. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1912-13 .. .. | 4,142 | .... | 86 | .... | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 4,173 | .... | 124 | .... | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 4,889 | .... | 78 | .... | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 5,040 | .... | 247 | .... | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 5,016 | .... | 209 | .... | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 6,123 | .... | 404 | .... | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .... | 5,111 | 492 | .... | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .... | 4,646 | 501 | .... | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .... | 4,842 | 1,210 | .... | |
| 1921-22 .. .. | .... | 2,340 | 957 | .... | |

*Statement VI produced by Mr. Covernton.*

Population.

| Name of the town. | Population according to the census of 1911. | Population according to the census of 1921. |
|---|---|---|
| Kaira .. .. .. .. | 8,669 | 8,277 |
| Nadiad .. .. .. .. | 27,145 | 31,939 |
| Anand .. .. .. .. | 10,139 | 11,054 |
| Umreth .. .. .. .. | 13,651 | 14,024 |
| Borsad .. .. .. .. | 11,860 | 12,116 |
| Kapadwanj .. .. .. .. | 13,518 | 14,794 |
| Kaira District .. .. .. .. | 6,91,744 | 7,10,982 |

*Statement VII produced by Mr. Covernton showing figures of consumption of country liquor in the Kaira Head-quarter Town of the Kaira District for the last 10 years (beginning from the year 1912-13).*

| Year. | 25° U. P. Gallons. | 30° U. P. Gallons. | 40° U. P. Gallons. | 60° U. P. Gallons. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1912-13 .. .. | 1,626 | .... | .... | .... | |
| 1913-14 .. .. | 1,952 | .... | .... | .... | |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 2,264 | .... | .... | 14 | |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 1,878 | .... | 317 | .... | |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 2,238 | .... | 191 | .... | |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 3,119 | .... | 291 | .... | |
| 1918-19 .. .. | .... | 2,051 | 340 | .... | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | .... | 2,284 | 98 | .... | |
| 1920-21 .. .. | .... | 2,184 | 141 | .... | |
| 1921-22 .. .. | .... | 151 | 2,204 | .... | |

*Statement VIII produced by Mr. Covernton.*

Number of offences in the Kaira District.

| Year. | Offences relating to liquor. | | | | | | Cases of illicit possession of Mhowra Flowers. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Illicit distillation and possession of implements, etc., for the same. | Illicit importation, exportation and transportation. | Illicit possession. | Unlicensed Sale. | Other miscellaneous offences. | Total. | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 232 | 25 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 281 | 8 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 88 | .. | 19 | .. | .. | 107 | 1,502 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 24 | 5 | 1 | .. | 53 | 83 | 482 |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 18 | 8 | 6 | .. | 29 | 61 | 29 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 25 | 3 | 21 | .. | .. | 49 | 430 |
| 1921-22 .. .. | 38 | 3 | 7 | .. | .. | 48 | .. |

No. 86.

REPLIES OF MR. HIRALAL GOKALDAS SHAH, PRESIDENT, KAIRA MUNICIPALITY.

1. I am practising as a pleader since last ten years and lead a public life as President of the Municipality. My above career has led me to come in contact with persons of all characters and as such I form my opinion as stated below.

2. From the first three lines of the extracts from the Resolution of the Government of India it appears that that Government is keen for sympathising the moderate use of alcohol and it is bent upon making provision for such persons. On further reading of the Resolution it appears that excess can well be checked by raising the tax on alcohol liquor as high as possible. Due to this policy taxes are raised to high extent, but this has no effect upon the excess drinking as the same lot of persons are found stumbling on roads in intoxication and in a senseless state of mind. Further, these persons are of notorious character and even though taxes are raised to any extent, it would induce these persons to be more active in adding to their evil ways to raise money through other vices, as theft, gambling, etc., and use it for the purpose.

The present policy of Government to raise taxation has led persons addicted to the vice to raise more money in order to meet with their demands by unscrupulous ways. The only good which has come out of this policy is nothing else but the addition in the income of Government.

3. If the Government really intends to put an effective check on intemperance and excessive use of liquor, the following policy should be adopted :—

(*a*) It should be determined what quantity, and that too of what quality, is sufficient for moderate use of it in drinking purposes, say, 4 drams or 6 drams of 50° or 20°, etc. Then it should be made a rule that no shop-keeper can sell more than the said quantity to any individual as is the case with opium and other drugs.

(*b*) Secondly, a provision should be made in the Abkari Act to make it punishable for those who are found strolling on public roads or in streets intoxicated in a senseless state of mind due to excess drinking. The onus should be placed on the accused to prove otherwise ; section 510, Indian Penal Code, is too liberal.

(*c*) Thirdly, on making the above provision in the Abkari Act, Police officers, including police patels in villages, should be asked to be active in their duties of bringing such offenders to courts of law and strict orders should be issued to the effect that any negligent conduct of these officials will be seriously taken notice of and these orders should be rigidly observed. The drunkards when under the heavy influence of intoxication ramble in streets and on high ways with such an attitude and behaviour that they create terror and annoyance to peaceful citizens and it is highly desirable that stringent measures be adopted for avoiding this kind of harassment and that could be done only if above measures be adopted by Government by legislation and administrative orders. Further, the infliction of fine for these offenders should be deterrent and that is likely to add to the income. In cities and towns police officers should be asked to spare time to visit the shops and vicinities thereof casually and see that no such case is found and, if found, to prosecute him. Especially evening time is the ordinary one for drunkards to visit shops.

(*d*) Use of liquor at and near the shops, at a destined distance, say a furlong or two, should be prohibited ; these persons get them drunk excessively and while returning to their homes, they on the way commit mischief. This could be avoided by above legislation.

4. Yes. The liquor is used as a medicinal purpose especially for females who are confined to bed. At least for medicinal purposes, the sale is necessary, though I am not in favour of its sale for drinking purposes.

5. (*a*) The excise establishment is employed spendthriftly and can well be asked to attend to these things of illicit means and these things be made punishable under the Abkari Act.

(*b*) This does not affect the question at all ; this situation can be met with by legislation in prohibiting importation and also as suggested in answer to question 3.

(*c*) Discontent of this sort may not be cared for as we do not care for spreading of the discontent, while law and order is to be put into execution for the safety of peace loving citizens. Our measures would be for the welfare of the public in their social life leading to a virtuous living, and while discharging out that duty if we have to give a quinine pill, we must see that it is swallowed away. I must say here that there are certain classes wherein it was customary to use liquor liberally and that was considered a sign of honour for those who spent more money for that head on festival occasions. But then the longstanding attempt to wipe out the vices by temperance societies and other efforts has moulded the life of these classes and now I find resolutions passed by such caste societies prohibiting such use on any occasion as a matter of rule. This change in the living of so-called classes will not bring down much discontent as a class or community.

(*d*) I think the present establishment is a prodigal one and more than enough, and some work should be created for them and the duties should be exacted from them with strictness. I find in some talukas there are hardly two or three cases in the whole year and the establishment maintained for this would be that of an Excise Inspector with high pay and peons. If it be said that it is due to this establishment that offences are not committed but checked, I beg leave to disagree with that contention; but really the mass has been educated to restrict use of liquors by their caste resolutions imposing fines for those who break their caste rule and it is due to fear of public censure that people are trained to avoid this kind of mischief.

(*e*) Other intoxicants and deleterious drugs should be made punishable and legislation should be made in respect thereof.

6. Moral as well as social prohibition by caste rules have made tremendous effect on the public in the present generation and if restrictive measures are adopted by Government that will have a larger influence on the present generation and no question remains for the next generation.

7. Legislation is necessary as is recommended in answer to question 3, but in order to wipe out this vice even by illicit distillation, societies which are aiming at it should be encouraged in their legitimate efforts to bring upon the pressure of social degradation in individual cases in a peaceful manner.

8. No experience of the effect of kinds of liquor in the question.

9. The means suggested in answers to questions 3 and 7 may be referred to.

10. (*b*) Mere increase in the price of liquor would have little effect; rather it would have some bad effect of adding to the offensive characters of drunkards to raise money to meet their demands.

(*c*) This is absolutely necessary. A limit should be fixed within which range no other shops should be opened, say, 8 or 10 miles.

(*d*) This is also necessary.

(*e*) Mere reduction in the strength of liquor would have no effect as the people would use it in greater quantity. This would have the best effect if prohibitive measures for a sale of a definite quantity, say, 4 to 6 drams per head, are adopted.

(*f*) Same as (*c*) above.

(*g*) There should be duties to such a great extent that hardly any man can make use of it and it will bring about restriction.

(*i*) The age limit should be kept at the age of 20.

(*j*) Answer to question 7 may be referred to.

(*k*) It should be made a rule that no person can consume liquor at or within the prescribed limit surrounding the shop. It happens that persons get themselves excessively drunk at or near the shop and while returning to their homes they play mischief of a character as is annoying to peaceful citizens; if any person wishes to have it, he may buy from the shop, but he should go home and get himself drunk when there is no likelihood of his turning out of his house again, unless specially intended to commit mischief.

11. I cannot follow the question.

12. No.

13. The policy of formation of advisory committees is not yet put into effect. Very recently, a few days back, a letter was received by the Kaira Municipality to elect one fit member to represent it on the advisory committee for the Mehmedabad Taluka. No rules are yet communicated and I am not aware of the way in which these committees have to work. In Matar Taluka some persons are named as members of that committee, but they say that since long they are named as members of such committee, but they do not know further in the matter. So it seems no active steps are following it to place these committees in working order.

14. I have sufficiently stated above that this leads the drunkards to seek money by thefts, gambling, etc. Further, their attitude when drunk is such as to create alarm amongst the peace loving citizens. It creates offences of the kind of rioting, affecting modesty of females, and so on. If one has to take revenge against another he hires these drunkards for committing mischief and terrorising the other side.

In small towns like Kaira, females have to go to fetch water at fixed places. Now if one drunkard having drunk excessively would have haunted the naka, females have to stop for the time till he leaves this place. To avoid this kind of hardship for the good of peace loving citizens, steps as are contemplated in my answer to question 3 may be adopted.

15. Retrenchment at its right place and raising of excise duty on foreign liquor by 100 per cent. would meet the loss in the income of duty on country liquors.

I would first deal with the question of retrenchment.

(*a*) The so-called retrenchment by abolishing posts of menials establishment, such as peons, and those of clerical establishment, would not bring any substantial saving as to stop the cry of want of funds.

(*b*) The retrenchment is necessary in curtailing the establishment of higher posts and especially doing away with the special establishment as far as practicable. I would here suggest that posts of Sub-Divisional Officers and Commissioners are of no importance. These are matters resting with the Imperial Government or His Majesty's Government, but we can ask them to adopt this policy.

(*c*) In the Excise Department, retrenchment is highly desirable. As I have stated above there are certain talukas wherein illicit distillation is not found and even for such talukas Excise Inspectors on Rs. 200 or more are engaged. In this respect it is my opinion that temperance societies, advisory committees (with certain powers), the making of the offences cognizable by police and entrusting the police with these duties would save good deal of expenses.

Then, as for revising of custom duties on importation of foreign liquors, these can be raised to an extent of 100 per cent.; most of the lot using this kind of liquor are rich persons who can afford money to spend for, and even if this tax is raised to 100 per cent. it would be a burden on rich persons.

Even if above steps would be insufficient to meet with our demands for expenditure, then the Central Government should be approached to make some allowances out of the contribution towards Central Government by this Government.

16. No.

18. The opium is given to infants mostly to make the infants sleep and enable the females to work their other household duties. This is prevalent in all classes. But this drug is given in such an insignificant quantity that it does not bring down any such harm as to result in death.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. SHAH replied to the President :—" There is only one country liqour shop and one foreign liqour shop in the town of Kaira.

" About 18 months ago, I had a letter from the Collector appointing me a member of the advisory committee. Since then no meeting of the committee has been called, except when the committee's questions were sent to the district officer, and then no members attended. I once wrote to the Collector asking what were the duties of the advisory committee, but I got no reply.

" The advisory committee should be given unfettered power in respect of the location of shops, the number of shops, and limiting the sale of liqour. The committee can be an elective one, but the right to vote should be confined only to persons possessing certain qualifications of income, education, etc. The lower classes should be made perfect first, and then they can be given the right to elect members on these committees.

" If the people of a locality desire that a shop should be removed, this should be done. The advisory committee, constituted as suggested by me, would determine the opinion.

" Total prohibition is possible, excepting in cases where alcohol is required for medicinal purposes. There will be a certain amount of individual discontent, but that would be negligible.

" The Government of India should be requested to let the Bombay Government have any additional revenue that might be derived by increasing the duty on foreign liqour. consumed in the Presidency by 100 per cent.

" The whole of the present abkari establishment may be dispensed with, and their duties entrusted to the police, except in places where there is heavy illicit distillation, where an excise inspector might be retained. The district police might be compensated for this work by means of rewards and promotions."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" I agree with the view that if the drinking classes had to give a vote on this question, they would, by an overwhelming majority, in very many cases vote for the extinction of the liqour traffic, but in the case of elections to advisory committees, only persons with certain defined qualifications should have the right to vote."

To Mr. Madon :—" If a drunken man commits some mischief in a private lane, or in his house, and nobody complains, still the police should take cognisance of his offence.

" I do want that people should not be allowed to drink liqour in the shops. Failing that, I would recommend that liqour shops should be located away from the cities, and if located there at all, should be shut off from the public view. I do not think that by taking liquor at home the drinkers will spread their habits to the other members of their family."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—" In delivery cases, women use liqour for medicinal purposes. I am speaking of women of higher classes also.

" There were instances during the continuance of the non-co-operation movement where liqour contractors took liqour to their homes and induced people to drink, offering free liqour. Some contractors even acted contrary to the abkari rules, and I believe that Government connived at it."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" What I advocate by the ration system is that no person should be given more than a certain quantity of liqour at one time. I have no objection to his being allowed to take the rationed quantity on more than once in the day. I am against municipalities being asked to make good the deficit in revenue caused by the application of local option or prohibition in their areas."

To Dr. Patil :—" I am against prohibiting opium, but I advocate that it should be made available for medicinal purposes.

" Government officers should co-operate in temperance work."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—" I am a member of the advisory committee in Kaira. I have not attended any meetings because no meetings have been called. I think the committee is a farce."

To Mr. Madon :—" I have not tried to bring to the notice of the Collector any particular suggestion regarding the location or removal of shops, because I do not as yet know what our duties are. I asked the Collector and the answer was that the rules would be made known to me in due course."

No. 87.

REPLIES OF MR. H. T. SORLEY, I.C.S., ASSISTANT COLLECTOR, KAIRA.

1. Indian Civil Service. No special opportunities beyond those provided in the course of my service as a district officer.

2. (*a*) The policy is sound. (*b*) The results are satisfactory. I consider that it works distinctly towards temperance.

3. I would advocate no change in the present policy which is sensible, moderate, and takes account of the practical difficulties in the way of temperance reform.

4. I am utterly opposed to total prohibition. In India it would be impracticable and would not stop the consumption of alcohol. Financially it would be ruinous because it would stop the excise revenue and require a costly establishment to enforce. The money required to run prohibition could be got only by cutting down essential public services.

5. The question does not arise.

6. The argument is pure speculation. There have been no means of testing the truth of it. In any case consideration of it may be postponed till it is first decided whether prohibition is desirable, practicable and a financial possibility.

7. I do not consider that the end to be aimed at is the complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor. I consider that to be impossible.

8. No.

9 and 10. All the means suggested have some value. Rationing of shops is a matter which cannot be carried beyond a certain point. Increasing the price of liquor similarly cannot be carried beyond a certain point. If it is so carried it will only encourage the consumption of inferior liquids, *e. g.*, methylated spirits, crude alcohol, varnish, etc., and will lead to illicit distillation. Both these evils have become prominent in the United States since the institution of prohibition and it is notorious that when vodka was prohibited in Russia people took to drinking anything they could get, including varnishes and oils. (*c*), (*d*), (*e*), (*f*) and (*i*) are much the most important means of enforcing a higher standard of temperance, which is all that a national policy should aim at. Probably (*c*), if not carried to extremes, is the most effective single measure of all. I have no constructive proposals to make as I am by no means convinced that there is any real drink problem in India to require constructive proposals. In any case the matter is one which cannot be settled on one wide general principle as the amount of drinking and the evil effects of it are much worse amongst a town population of millhands than they are in small mofussil villages amongst a predominantly agricultural population. The measures necessary to promote temperance amongst the millhands of Bombay are quite different from those necessary amongst the rural population of Kanara or the Konkan. I see no necessity for formulating any policy at all beyond that already laid down. India has little to complain of as regards the evils of drink. The agitation for prohibition is chiefly due to the dreams of idealists and social reformers inspired by religious motives.

11. I am not in favour of local option.

12. Local bodies are quite incapable of doing any sort of justice in these matters in the present state of local self-government in India. They would also be perfectly incapable of raising an anna to make good the revenue that would be lost by the stopping of the excise.

13. They are of little use. However, in my opinion the reduction of liquor shops is one of the best ways of promoting temperance and Advisory Committees can help considerably in forming or consolidating public opinion on the policy to be adopted. It is difficult, however, to suggest ways of giving these Committees any powers beyond those of advice to the Executive. The Advisory Committees will be useless unless men who command public respect are members.

14. I do not know what is meant in this question by the evil of drink. There is no evil in drink in itself. It is only excessive drinking which has bad effects on the individual and on society. I cannot say that in India excessive drinking has very much to do with the amount of crime. The crime in India is due chiefly to a low standard of education, to jealousy and strife about women, and to an absence of social discipline. In England on the other hand it is quite likely that excessive drinking does considerably add to the amount of crime and it is well known that there is a close connection there between the criminal and the drunkard class. But this is not so in India and there is no reason to believe it ever will be so. Drink taken to excess does impair the output of work both mental and physical. But alcohol taken in moderation never yet did anyone any harm.

16. No.

17. I have no information.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. H. T. SORLEY replied to the President :—" I was in Kaira for about a year and a half I was also a member of the excise advisory committee in Kaira, *namely*, that for the Northern

Sub-division. During the eighteen months we had only one meeting and that was to consider answers to questions framed by the Excise Committee. It was open to members of the advisory committee to bring in any points to be discussed. If the members of the committee were not aware of their duties, they could have written to the Collector, who would at once have given them the information.

"In Kaira District people are now not sufficiently advanced to be able to exercise local option. I do consider that the work done by the elected members in the district boards and municipalities is good enough, but on that account I would not allow the class of men who are represented on the local boards and municipalities to decide questions regarding the location of shops. My reason for this is that they do not consider the matter from the point of view of the person who patronises the liquor shop."

*Q.* So, if the drinking classes are elected to the advisory committees, will that cure the defect ?

*A.* No : because in my opinion the drinking classes are not sufficiently educated to realise the importance of the matter they are called upon to decide.

*Q.* Suppose the drinking classes themselves by a majority decide that a particular shop in a locality should be removed, will you allow them to decide that for themselves ? *A.* I should, provided I subscribed to the principle of local option. I do not think local option is a practical measure. So far as I know, it has not worked well in Scotland.

"I am in favour of gradually curtailing the consumption of liquor, within limits. But this process cannot be carried beyond a certain stage without defeating its own end. I am not sure whether this could be done by reducing the number of shops. I am in favour of reducing the strength of liquor. I have not come across cases where villages which were flourishing before a liquor shop existed in their vicinity have been ruined after the opening of a new shop in their vicinity.

*Q.* In the case of opening new liquor shops will you like that before they are opened the people should be asked to decide whether they want them or not ? *A.* This is a matter in which the advisory committee will be of much use.

*Q.* Would you agree that to be decided by the opinion of the people in the locality ? *A.* I should think it is desirable. I agree that their voice should be the determining voice in the case provided their decision is carried out in accordance with the general policy approved of by the whole country.

"I would not entrust the advisory committees with executive powers, because I do not think it is desirable to do so unless we have an idea as to how they will use their powers. This question of giving them executive powers will also depend on the sort of power you give them. I should not give an advisory committee at the present stage power to close down shops. As regards location of shops they might get some power.

"In the course of my experience as an Assistant Collector, where I have had the opportunity of talking with very many persons of different kinds on this subject. I have never had the slightest reason to believe that there is a general cry that Government want to encourage drink in order to get more revenue. Apart from a few newspapers which have had articles to that effect I have seen nothing to lead me to believe that any such complaint exists. I do not think it is advisable to give advisory committees power to close down liquor shops merely in order to meet criticism of this kind."

To Dr. Patil :—"I do not think that if we reduce the strength of country liquor, people will take to foreign liquor. I am informed that in Ahmedabad the reduction in the strength has had no such results. I consider that what happens in Ahmedabad is a very good criticism of what will happen in other industrial areas where the drinking of liquor by millhands renders some sort of control desirable.

"If a mill-owner objects to the location of a liquor shop in his mill area, I do not think Government should take any action.

"I am not in favour of limiting consumption of liquor by the coupon system, as it would be unduly interfering with the liberty of the subject."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—"The object which Government have in view in formulating their excise policy is being accomplished. Unless there was an inspection of what they do in private life, I do not think it is possible to see that people do not drink to excess. I have no information whether the condition that a man who has shown signs of intoxication is not to be served with liquor is being observed by the shop-keepers or not. Personally, I do not think that considerations of revenue influence the location and number of liquor shops.

"It is to the interest of the shop-keeper to sell as much liquor as he can and at as high prices as possible, but I do not think he encourages people to drink, and, as far as I know he does not tout for customers. If drink is served to boys, the best remedy is the strict enforcement of the law. In places like Ahmedabad, where there is much factory labour, it is conceivable that young boys have liquor served out to them. If the shops were not to be run for profit, I cannot

say whether it would work for temperance. It all depends on the sort of people that would run them. They might serve liquor to people below the legal age, if they had an inducement to do so. It is perfectly true that under prohibition the fact that a drunkard has to take risks to avoid detection may result in a diminution in the volume of drinking by certain persons ; and that that would be an influence making for temperance within certain limits. But I do not think that it is possible to say to what extent the advantages to the country or the individual arising from this fact would be set off against the evils and disadvantages which would come with the enforcement of prohibition. That is a matter in which it is impossible to dogmatise one way or the other. But I can say that one of the first results of prohibition would be a great increase in illicit distillation. Prohibition would not save the next generation unless it stopped the evil effects now produced by the excessive drinking of those who drink to excess. Perhaps under prohibition a smaller number of persons might drink. But the evil to the country comes only from the drinking to excess and under prohibition it is certain that there would be a great illicit consumption of liquor and that the taking of drugs would be greatly stimulated. The results on the next generation cannot therefore be foretold with any accuracy. Apart from certain industrial areas which can be counted on the fingers of the hands I do not consider that there is a drink *evil* in India. For the industrial areas control of some sort is desirable, but I am unable to suggest any practical means of control. Reduction in the strength of liquor is the best single principle to follow."

To the President :—"I also suggest a general reduction in the number of shops, but in a particular area where a certain number of shops have been established, the effect of removing one or two shops will simply be to let the others get better trade, but probably a fewer number of people might drink.

" The advisory committee would tell the people what the policy of Government is, and also influence the policy of Government.

" According to the new rules the advisory committees can advise about the location of a liquor shop. I am not aware of the full constitution, but probably the Collector, as the Chairman, calls a meeting of the committee. If he does not, the members can ask him to call a meeting. I think, on the whole, the Collector selects the persons for the committees. He is not bound by a committee's decision.

" Compulsory education is in a way interference with personal liberty, but not in the same sense as preventing a man from drinking, which I do not consider an evil, and that is one of my objections to prohibition. Interference with personal liberty is only one of the objections I have to urge against prohibition. I have many other objections. Prohibition is in my opinion an *undue* interference with personal liberty. The same cannot be said of compulsory education. Besides, I doubt if the desired result would be achieved, and the end would justify the means. Without proper control, the evil may grow in industrial areas.

" I do not think people in urban areas would be prepared to pay a special tax in order to make up the revenue deficit, if prohibition were introduced. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" The importation of Java liquor to the extent stated is not in my opinion doing any harm to the country or individuals. Harm from the drinking of liquor proceeds from the drinking of it in excess. If the Java liquor is bad people will not drink it. If it is chemically bad or poisonous or adulterated in such a way as to be deleterious, there is plenty of remedy for dealing with the matter under the existing laws.

" The rationing system has not had a fair trial, but it is not sound, unless the demand and the supply can be equalised. If the shop-keeper exhausts his supply before the next ration is due he might adopt illicit means of getting a supply. I have been continually getting requests from contractors to allow them in advance next month's supply.

" There is no competition between foreign and country liquor, because the classes of people who drink them are different. Rationing of country liquor is not likely to lead to greater consumption of foreign liquor, which is more expensive, though I have not compared the prices. "

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—" The detection of excise offences is limited by the number and capacity of the preventive staff. I believe there is only about one-tenth of the offences of illicit distillation being detected. If any of the conditions is infringed by the shop-keepers in Ahmedabad, it could be detected by having a larger staff. "

To Mr. Madon :—" It would impair the efficiency of the police considerably in one way or the other if the excise work is passed on to them.

" I do not think the village patel is likely to know of cases of illicit distillation because the illicit distillation takes place secretly in the fields and not in the village itself where the patel spends most of his time. The excise staff can know it by making enquiries of the people of the village. The licensees may give the information—it does not matter from whom the information is obtained. "

To the President :—" I have no information as to whether there were cases of illicit distillation when the liquor shops were closed in Ahmedabad for about 4 months, but I will make enquiries. "

*Statement of country liquor cases detected during the riot period in 1919 in Ahmedabad City when the shops were closed, i.e., 11-4-19 to 10-6-19, 10-7-19 to 22-7-19, 1-10-19 to 20-10-19 and 18-3-20 to 20-3-20.*

| Date of detection. | Illicit distillation. | Illicit sale. | Illicit possession. | Sentence. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11th May 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 (5 accused) | One month's rigorous imprisonment each. |
| 29th May 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Fine of Rs. 15. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. |
| 31st May 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 (3 accused) | Fine of Rs. 5 each. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | One month's rigorous imprisonment. |
| 8th June 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 (2 accused) | Do. |
| 2nd Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Fine of Rs. 10. |
| 7th Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | .... |
| 8th Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Fine of Rs. 5. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 10. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 5. |
| 9th Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 5. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 5. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 10. |
| Do. .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 10. |
| 11th Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 10. |
| 12th Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 10. |
| 14th Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 10. |
| 16th Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 10. |
| 19th Oct. 1919 .. | .... | .... | 1 | Do. 5. |

Total 22 cases.

Forwarded with compliments to the Chairman, Excise Committee, with reference to his verbal request made yesterday at the close of the evidence of the undersigned.

24th April 1923.

H. T. SORLEY,
Collector, Ahmedabad

No. 88.

REPLIES OF THE EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, MATAR.

1. We are members of the Excise Advisory Committee recently constituted by Government. As we are moving about in the taluka we have opportunities to study the habits and conditions of the people who are in the habit of taking liquor.

2. We favour the policy, but it has not been able to put an effective check on intemperance.

3. We have to suggest no change in the selected policy of Government.

4. We are not in favour of total prohibition. It is not a practical measure.

5. Since we are not in favour of total or partial prohibition it is not necessary to give replies to the point.

6. The argument is reasonable and we have nothing to say against it.

7. Legislation is the only effective method, in our opinion, for bringing about a complete cessation of consumption of alcholic liquor, but in order to minimise the necessity for invoking the aid of law it would be desirable that caste *panchayats* should exercise social pressure on those who take to this drink evil and the whole work should be backed up by effective propaganda.

8. If the principle of prohibition is to be adopted, it should be applied to all liquors whether distilled or fermented, except so far as they are necessary for medical purposes. We are not in favour of prohibiting the use of toddy or shindi.

9. We suggest the same means which are proposed in question No. 10.

10. (*d*) The present hours are 10-30 a.m. to 9 p.m. These hours should be reduced to 10-30 a.m. to 8 p.m. The late hours encourage crimes.

10. (*i*) The age should be fixed at 18 and gradually raised to 20 years.

11. We are not in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option; for it would be very difficult to ascertain that the demand for local option really originates from those affected by it.

12. We are in favour of giving the proposed powers to the municipalities and local boards.

13. The committees are of recent creation and we are not in a position to offer any opinion on the subject.

14. The drink evil contributes to an increase of crime in this District. Its effect on the output of work depends on whether it is taken in moderation or in excess. If the former it would have a better effect, but if taken in excess it has an adverse effect, on the output of work.

15. All what we can suggest is that the loss of revenue should be met from taxation on articles of luxury including tea, tobacco. Import duties should also be raised.

16. We have no remarks to make.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent among the labouring classes and to some extent in the middle classes also. It has no appreciable effect on the death-rate.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. AMRATRAO KHANDERAO PRADHAN, Member, Excise Advisory Committee, Matar, replied to the President :—" There was only one meeting called, after the formation of the Advisory Committee about a year ago, to answer the questionnaire sent by the Excise Committee. We have no written instructions from Government as to what our duties are, but I understand that we are to try to reduce consumption of liquor, and to inform Government of any defects found in the working of their system.

" My impression is that the evil of intemperance has increased considerably. At the only meeting to which we were invited, the committee unanimously asked the Collector to reduce two shops, those at Navagam and Rhadoo, and have one at Naika instead. Even the District Deputy Collector who presided at the meeting did not dissent from this view; but our suggestion was not listened to.

" Liquor should be sold as cheap as possible, regardless of any profit to be made out of the business. Crimes against abkari law are due to dearness of liquor, and they will disappear by making liquor cheap.

" At present the Collector writes to the authorities of the taluka local board to appoint men on the advisory committee, either from among the members of the taluka board or others, and this arrangement, I think, is satisfactory. I believe that if the power to determine certain questions is left with the advisory committee they will be able to discharge them satisfactorily, and there is no danger of their being led away by outside influences, although there may be minimum Government control. In cases where the Collector has to override the decisions of the

committee, he should make a reference to authorities, and abide by their decision. There are no representatives of the drinking classes or of the liquor trade on the committee at Matar. All of them belong to classes who do not openly drink. I do not think the committee will fail to consider the wishes of the drinking classes or to set them aside lightly.

" When picketing was going on in Kaira, it came to my knowledge that the licensees used to sell liquor at private houses, but I cannot say whether the excise officers knew about these breaches of the law and connived at them or not. In the Kaira District, in some places which are on the borders of Indian States, fixed selling prices have been prescribed, and yet it has come to my knowledge that the licensees sell at any price."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" The population of Matar is 4,500. There are about three other shops at distances of 4 to 5 miles from each other. The population consists mainly of Patidars who do not drink, and Dharalas who do. There is no toddy or shindi there.

" At present people who commit breaches of peace on the roads or other offences through getting drunk are let off lightly, and that encourages their belief that Government want people to drink.

" I am of opinion that members of the advisory committee should be authorised to call a few leading people from caste panchayats and to explain to them the evils of drink, and then get them to resolve against drink. Though nothing now prevents them from forming into a small association and carrying on such propaganda, the work would be more effectively done if the advisory committees were authorised by Government in the manner I have suggested.

" If liquor is made cheaper, people may drink more, and therefore I have suggested that men committing breaches of the peace on the public streets, or disturbances at home, should be more severely dealt with.

" The price of country liquor should be lessened, because some of the educated and other people are taking to foreign liquors such as brandy. Rationing of shops is not likely to lead to any good results ; the shopkeepers may thereby be tempted to get illicit liquor."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—" The Collector nominates two members on the advisory committee, and the remaining four are elected. The proceedings of the first meeting that I attended were recorded.

" At the time when I attended the meeting of the advisory committee I was of opinion along with the other members that drink in moderation had a good effect on the output of work, but I have since changed my opinion and now think that a man who does not drink at all can do much better work.

" I am a landlord.

" My object in advising that liquor should be sold as cheap as possible was to reduce crime. I am of opinion that by gradual reduction of the number of shops, leading up to prohibition the next generation will be benefitted. The prohibition of liquor will also improve the condition of the present generation. But I believe that Government will not readily consent to stop the liquor trade as they are not likely to sacrifice the huge income from this trade.

" I was present at the time of the picketing operations in Kaira. The abkari officers were also present in the city at that time. I think that the excise officers must have connived at the breaches of the excise law of which I have given instances. The picketers were beaten by people who frequented the shops for the purpose of drinking, but the police connived at that. I came to know that the licensees also had employed for the purpose some men under them by giving them free liquor. In Kaira I do not know of any abkari officers receiving undue perquisites from the licensees."

To Dr. Patil :—" Children are given opium in order that they may sleep, but such children suffer from constipation. It is also likely that they will get ill."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I have got no special reasons for changing my opinion with regard to question 14."

" I would also like to recommend to the Committee that the men who commit offences of account of drink should be punished not only for the offence but for getting drunk also."

*Memorandum* from the Collector of Kaira No. X. A. D., dated 16th April 1923.*

With reference to his petition dated 11th April 1923 asking for certain information regarding excise matters, a list shewing the country liquor shops of the districts and the license fee realized for these shops during the past ten years is enclosed herewith.

2. The Government income from liquor is derived from two sources (1) the still-head duty levied at the place of manufacture, *i.e.*, the distillery, and (2) license fees for shops. This office is quite unable to state what is the income derived from still-head duty, and for this if he requires the information he should apply to the Commissioner of Excise. There are also no figures available in this office to shew what is the total revenue derived by Government from license fees for the Bombay Presidency as a whole. The figures for the district are given in the list sent herewith, for ten years. It is not possible in the time to extract figures for a longer period.

* Handed over by the witness.

3. This office is unable to supply figures regarding the expenditure of the Excise Department either for the whole Presidency, or for the Kaira District, the figures not being available here.

4. It is not clear what he means by asking the fixed selling price "in the beginning". At present there is no fixed selling price of liquor in auctioned shops. But in shops given out on fixed license fees, the maximum selling price allowed is Rs. 5 annas 4 for 30 U.P. liquor, and Rs. 4 annas 8 for 40 U.P. These rates have been in force for two years. But it is not possible to state what rates, if any, were fixed in the earliest days of the British administration.

5. The figures of the annual sale at each shop are not available in this office. He can probably obtain the figures for some years back from the office of the Superintendent, or from the Inspectors.

S. H. COVERNTON,
Collector of Kaira.

To

Mr. Amratrao Khandrao Pradhan, Vaidvada, Kaira.

*List of country liquor shops in the Kaira District.*

| Serial No. | Name of the Taluka. | Name of the Village. | ——— |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | "AUCTION" SHOPS. | |
| 1 | Mehmedabad .. | Kaira. | |
| 2 | Do. .. | Mehmedabad. | |
| 3 | Do. .. | Kanij. | |
| 4 | Nadiad .. | Nadiad, Ahmedabadi gate. | |
| 5 | Do. .. | Nadiad, Salem gate. | |
| 6 | Do. .. | Mahudha. | |
| 7 | Anand .. | Anand station .. .. | Fixed selling price. |
| 8 | Do. .. | Anand Town .. .. | Fixed selling price. |
| 9 | Do. .. | Umreth. | |
| 10 | Do. .. | Wasad .. .. | Fixed selling price. |
| 11 | Do. .. | Boriavi. | |
| 12 | Kapadvanj .. | Kapadvanj, Sarkhalia gate. | |
| 13 | Do. .. | Kapadvanj, Ganabi Bari. | |
| 14 | Matar .. | Matar. | |
| 15 | Thasra .. | Thasra. | |
| 16 | Do. .. | Dakor. | |
| 17 | Borsad .. | Borsad .. .. | Fixed selling price. |
| | | FIXED FEE SHOPS. | |
| 18 | Anand .. | Bhalej. | |
| 19 | Do. .. | Od. | |
| 20 | Do. .. | Sarsa. | |
| 21 | Do. .. | Karamsad. | |
| 22 | Do. .. | Napad. | |
| 23 | Do. .. | Gana. | |
| 24 | Do. .. | Pansora. | |
| 25 | Do. .. | Sindapur. | |
| 26 | Do. .. | Vehera. | |
| 27 | Do. .. | Khambholaj. | |
| 28 | Borsad .. | Virsad. | |
| 29 | Do. .. | Ras. | |
| 30 | Do. .. | Palej. | |
| 31 | Do. .. | Bhetashi. | |
| 32 | Do. .. | Kanwadi. | |
| 33 | Do. .. | Anklav. | |
| 34 | Do. .. | Alarsa. | |
| 35 | Do. .. | Dehemi. | |
| 36 | Do. .. | Dehewan. | |
| 37 | Do. .. | Kathana. | |
| 38 | Do. .. | Khatnal. | |
| 39 | Do. .. | Pandoli. | |
| 40 | Do. .. | Salol. | |
| 41 | Do. .. | Umeta. | |
| 42 | Kapadvanj .. | Kathlal. | |
| 43 | Do. .. | Chhipadi. | |
| 44 | Do. .. | Vadol. | |
| 45 | Do. .. | Sunda. | |
| 46 | Do. .. | Barsida. | |
| 47 | Do. .. | Betawada. | |
| 48 | Do. .. | Khadal. | |
| 49 | Matar .. | Alindra. | |
| 50 | Do. .. | Sinjwada. | |
| 51 | Do. .. | Navalgam. | |
| 52 | Do. .. | Bhalada. | |
| 53 | Do. .. | Limbashi. | |

| Serial No. | Name of the Taluka. | Name of the Village. | ——— |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | FIXED FEE SHOPS—*contd.* | |
| 54 | Matar .. | Radhu. | |
| 55 | Do. .. | Dothli. | |
| 56 | Mehmedabad .. | Sinhuj. | |
| 57 | Do. .. | Karoli. | |
| 58 | Do. .. | Wanthwali. | |
| 59 | Do. .. | Mokwa. | |
| 60 | Do. .. | Ghodasar. | |
| 61 | Do. .. | Haldervas. | |
| 62 | Nadiad .. | Bamroli. | |
| 63 | Do. .. | Andhaj. | |
| 64 | Do. .. | Chunel. | |
| 65 | Do. .. | Moholel. | |
| 66 | Do. .. | Vina. | |
| 67 | Do. .. | Chaklashi. | |
| 68 | Do. .. | Mahisa. | |
| 69 | Thasra .. | Pali. | |
| 70 | Do. .. | Wanghroli. | |
| 71 | Do. .. | Sandheli. | |
| 72 | Do. .. | Rania. | |
| 73 | Do. .. | Anghadi. | |
| 74 | Do. .. | Cheturdumba. | |
| 75 | Do. .. | Nesh. | |
| 76 | Do. .. | Masra. | |

*List showing income from license fee of country liquor shops in the Kaira District for the last ten years.*

| Year. | | | Amount. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Rs. |
| 1913-1914 | .. | .. | 6,708 |
| 1914-1915 | .. | .. | 8,159 |
| 1915-1916 | .. | .. | 13,338 |
| 1916-1917 | .. | .. | 20,919 |
| 1917-1918 | .. | .. | 16,837 |
| 1918-1919 | .. | .. | 1,43,487 |
| 1919-1920 | .. | .. | 1,42,838 |
| 1920-1921 | .. | .. | 1,38,312 |
| 1921-1922 | .. | .. | 1,07,145 |
| 1922-1923 | .. | .. | 45,702 |

S. H. COVERNTON,
Collector of Kaira.

No. 89.

REPLIES OF MR. MAGANLAL B. PATEL, MILL AGENT, AHMEDABAD.

1. Profession.—Agent of weaving mills.

2. The policy of Government on excise is in no way beneficial to the masses of the country. However, the regulations of the excise duty put some restrictions on the people who are addicted to drink, but these regulations are liberal and they should be put into force strictly. The people are much ruined owing to this bad habit, being quite careless of their social condition. The policy of Government, since manyy ars, has brought no fruitful advantage on the drinks but in some measures it has helped against the desired results.

3. (*a*) The sale of liquor should be stopped altogether.

(*b*) Heavy taxation should be levied on production as well as on sale.

(*c*) The people should be trained and they should be preached the evils of drink by experimental devises such as magic lanterns, etc.

(*d*) The masses and other low class people who are addicted to this evil should be imparted free and compulsory education.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition and I consider it to be a practical measure. Measures and steps have been suggested in answer to question 3.

5. (*a*) Obtaining liquor from palm trees, etc., should also be prohibited.

(*b*) Persons bringing liquor, etc., from Indian States and Portuguese territory should also be prohibited to bring the same.

(*c*) When the persons of certain classes will be in difficulty of getting liquor, they themselves will forget their usual habits.

(*d*) The persons taking other intoxicants and drugs should be severely dealt with.

6. I am of opinion that the prohibition will be effective somewhat in the present generation and will be totally effective in the next generation.

7. The consumption of alcoholic liquor can be better prohibited by legislative measures.

8. I am of opinion that the principle of prohibition should be applied to all liquors whether distilled or fermented. Also the use of toddy and shindi should be prohibited.

9. I am of opinion that absolute prohibition is desirable.

10. The means suggested in question 10 are all beneficial. But all of them should be put into immediate practice.

11. I am in favour of the principle of local option.

12. I am in favour of abolishing this evil from the root and in this case there is no need of investing local bodies with any power in this respect.

13. The existing advisory committees are useful institutions and I hope that the committees will carry out the work with strict force.

14. The evil of drink has bad effect on the out-put of work and thus the production is greatly decreased. Also it contributes to an increase in crime.

15. There are various sources for income to be derived from to make up the loss.

(*i*) Import duties should be increased.

(*ii*) Army expenditure should be decreased.

16. Opium and hemp drugs should also be prohibited.

The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent to some extent in all classes and more particularly in low castes, such as Garasyas and Rajputs. The death rate of children is increased thereby.

I hope that the above explanation will be satisfactory and beneficial to the people at large, in my opinion. I wish that total prohibition will take place as a result of the suggestions of the Committee.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MAGANLAL B. PATEL replied to the President :—

"I am only connected with the Rajpur Mills. It is a weaving mill employing 150 hands. After the Holi holidays it is usual for the employees who drink to absent themselves for two days. When they return they do not do steady work. The number of absentees after a holiday (speaking of the Ahmedabad mills generally) is 5 to 10 per cent. But in our mills it is only 2 or 3 per cent. I believe that their absence is due to drink and not to any other cause. The Mahomedans in our mills do not drink. Only two or three per cent. of our labourers drink.

"I do not think that drink is necessary for the mill hands after the day's work. Tea or coffee would quite do.

" I am in favour of local option, because I consider that the majority of a local area would be right in enforcing their views on the minority, so far as the drink question is concerned."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :— " We employ women in our mills in the winding department. I do not know of any woman in our mills who drinks, although I hear that in some of the other mills women also drink.

" We employ some Mahomedan boys, but neither they nor the Mahomedan and Hindu labourers living in the mill chawls get drunk, even during holidays. If heads of departments do not drink, it should have some good effect and so far as I know they do not drink. There would be no hardship if the employes in the mills are taxed to about half the extent of the saving they would effect by stopping drinking. I have no suggestions to offer for making up the deficit in the provincial revenues. If liquor shops are closed during holidays, it will have good effect.

" I think the excise policy of Government is influenced both by the revenue they get and the needs of moderate drinkers. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Liquor should be sold at prohibitive rates. Although there is no toddy here, I have seen the evil effects of drinking toddy in other places. "

No. 90.

REPLIES OF MR. GOVERDHAN I. PATEL ON BEHALF OF THE AHMEDABAD MILLOWNERS' ASSOCIATION.

1. I am a mill-agent and as such am in close contact with the working classes of a large industrial city like Ahmedabad. I had also occasion to watch and study the movement of liquor-shop picketting carried on for some time at Ahmedabad and had also occasion of discussing the drink problem with men holding various shades of views in matters social and political.

2. (*a*) " The settled policy " of the Government of India, as they say is—

(1) " to minimise temptation to those who do not drink " and

(2) " to discourage excess among those who do ".

This policy is based on their conception as to what the duties of Government are. They are two-fold. First, they think it outside their scope of duty as Government " to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol *in moderation* " and secondly, not only do they not stop with absolute non-interference but, on the contrary, they deem it necessary—it is not clear whether because of their *duty* as a Government—to make " *due* provision for the needs of " moderate drinkers.

I find myself unable to see eye to eye with the Government at the two-fold bases on which they base their policy. The Government condemn in no unmistakable terms excessive drinking. They would go the length of interference to prevent excess. Further, they also tacitly admit that drinking, even though moderately, is an evil because they clearly speak of " minimising temptations ". If, then, the drink habit is an evil and in my humble view it is nothing but an unmixed evil, the policy of the Government should be to *root* out the evil and not *merely to limit its potentialities for evil effects.* The present policy is to allow the habit to remain, nay, provide facilities for its continuation and attempt to subscribe it within certain limits. In the very nature of things such an attempt was *doomed* to fail and in my humble opinion time has proved its failure. " Minimising temptations " and " discouraging excess " are not only vague but relative terms and a goal or policy defined or described by these terms would not mean much. Again the policy was enunciated so far back as 1905. India had always taken a view different from the West as to the necessity of intoxicating drink based upon religious injunctions and climatic conditions ; but at the time of the enunciation of the policy by the Government of India, the West had not come to believe that total abstinence was even worthy of serious consideration. Times have changed since then and prohibition has so steadily gained ground that one would not wonder if a large area of the West goes dry within a few years. The policy of Government ought to be therefore changed. It must aim at *reducing to nil* the consumption of alcohol as well as all other intoxicating drinks. It is absolutely essential for the moral and material well-being of the people generally and in addition particularly to prevent loss of working capacity, efficiency and health of the working classes living in large industrial centres. The policy being thus basically incorrect, according to my humble view, the methods suggested fall far short of the requirements of the situation. But methods are not equal even to the limited scope set out by the policy. There is an unnecessary nervousness about the possibilities of illicit production or substitution of more harmful drugs. This fear leads to a halting policy to reduce the number of shops and leaves it almost entirely to increased taxation to bring about the desired result. It is a fallacy to suppose that increased taxation would necessarily mean *decreased* consumption. Increased taxation would only mean increased revenue which in turn would mean greater difficulties, as years roll on, to boldly meet the loss of it. It also brings on the Excise officers a mentality bewailed by the Excise Committee of 1905-06, *viz.*, that enhanced revenue would be the criterion of efficiency and that they had no direct interest in the policy of restricting consumption.

(*b*) In my humble view, the results of this policy, as it has been actually carried out, are far from encouraging, and it has not put any *check*, not to speak of any *effective* check, even on intemperance. While the number of shops has been a little reduced, the consumption is strictly on an increase. In his report on the administration of the Excise Department for 1920-21, dated 10th August 1921, the Commissioner of Excise says : " There is very definite connection between the condition of labour and consumption of alcohol ". The rising consumption in such a poor district as Ratnagiri will show that contagion does spread in spite of higher prices. In fact, since 1908-09 while the consumption of country spiritous liquors has increased by about 13 per cent. (2,615,000 gallons as against 2,324,319), the consumption of toddy has gone up by about 100 per cent. (from 6,347,029 gallons to 12,563,000 gallons), not to speak of increases in the consumption of the hemp-drugs and imported liquors. These figures bear a very eloquent testimony as to how far Government policy has succeeded ; comment is unnecessary. The increase in consumption means either more people have contracted the habit or persons habituated to drink have been drinking immoderately or both. Whatever the interpretation, it indicates the failure of the Government policy.

3. Answers to questions 2 (*a*) and 2 (*b*) will show that I differ fundamentally from the very basis of the Government policy. I would suggest the ending of this policy and, starting on setting total prohibition as the goal to be reached in a definite period, say, 5 years in no case beyond 10 years. By the time, however, the process whereby the goal is to be reached is settled, I would suggest that the Government policy should aim at substantial reduction of the consumption. This could be done broadly speaking by —

(1) Reducing the number of shops.

(2) Supplying every shop only a fixed quantity and no more, which fixed quantity should be less by 20 per cent. of the last year's consumption and be determined with reference to the total consumption of the area and the number of shops.

(3) Curtailing the hours of sale.

(4) Closing the shops on Sundays and all public holidays and also on pay days in industrial centres.

(5) Restricting the number of licenses for the sale of foreign liquor and imposing the maximum limit saleable by each licensee.

I believe the above main changes could be immediately introduced by mere executive orders without any legislation.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. My reasons briefly stated are as under :—

(1) Drinking is an unmixed evil undermining the health and the morals of people.

(2) Criminal tendencies are traceable to this habit.

(3) It damages man's working capacities, causes loss of efficiency, promotes ill-health and disease and encourages many other forms of vice.

(4) Prohibition is the natural policy for India. Her people are naturally abstemious and simple. The two great religions of the land contain emphatic injunctions against drinking and climatic conditions are also in favour of total abstinence. Considered and respectable public opinion is also against drink.

(5) Money spent over drinking is spent unproductively without any beneficial return either to the individual or to the society.

I consider it a practical measure. There is no inherent impracticability in it.

For carrying out prohibition, I would suggest the carrying out of the definite reduction in consumption of liquor by reducing the supply of liquor to retail vendors, say, about 20 per cent. per year, thus stopping all sales by the end of five years. At the end of this period, legislation on the lines of the prohibition laws of America may be enacted. There must also be side by side some machinery to detect and punish breaches and violations of Abkari laws by illicit production, sale, transport, possession, etc. ; such a gradual reduction will cause minimum disturbance to the Government finances and will also lead to minimum inconvenience to the hard drinker and thus minimise the possibilities of illicit traffic.

5. My general reply to the various objections is that they raise problematic questions as to certain possibilities and are presented in an exaggerated form more to scare away a prohibitionist than to advance any substantial grounds against prohibition. Where there is a will there will always be found a way and, even if actual experience shows that some of the difficulties are real, still a Government determined on prohibition will not find it difficult to find out a solution. Moreover, absence of prohibition has been given a chance till now and, looking to the interest at stake, prohibition is worthy of being given a trial. Now to the objections *seriatim* :—

(*a*) The facilities referred to exist even now. It is not easily comprehensible why they should be availed of more when there is prohibition. It is perhaps meant that people at present do not take the trouble to use those facilities because they get liquor. But is this a fact ? If it is so easy to avail oneself of the facility without fear of detection as is suggested while arguing against prohibition, then people must be using those facilities even now as it saves them the high cost of Government duty. And if that cannot be done now without the fear of detection, how can that be done when there is a prohibition ? In any case, prohibition or no prohibition makes no change in the position.

(*b*) This difficulty is not really so formidable. In the first place, the proximity will affect only boundary tracts and not large tracts in the interior. Again the policy adopted by one Government is bound to influence other Governments, whether of Indian States, Portuguese territory or British districts. It may also be remembered here that it is our Gove nment that supplies liquor to a large number of Indian States. There is no fear, in such cases at least, of liquor being imported from those States. It means only the necessity of more effective watch on the border lines. Moreover, even at present there must be going on some smuggling due to higher cost on account of duty. But assuming that there will be some illicit import or that there will be some people on the border tracts who will continue to drink by going into adjoining territories, is it proper to expose a vas majority of the people to the temptations of drink ? Nobody thinks of doing away wit

all penal legislation simply because a few people may be able to commit crimes without being detected. It may here be noted that the States of Bhavnagar and Limbdi have adopted total prohibition of Indian liquor.

(*c*) Religious customs will have to be respected as is done by the American Prohibition Act also. As regards the habit, it is the duty of Government to wean people from such habits as undermine the health, comfort and the material and moral well-being of the ryot. Drinking is a habit with what are called the lowest classes. Government may not be nervous about any discontent among them, as intelligentia will not only be with the Government on this question but will help to allay the discontent, if any.

(*d*) This objection assumes that there will be illicit distillation everywhere. There is no warrant for any such assumption as that. As remarked by the Commissioner of Customs, increase of the drink-habit is noticeable among the industrial classes. It is therefore such classes who are more likely to resort to illicit distillation. But the conditions of labour are such as hardly to leave them that time and energy and as well the necessary seclusion for secretly carrying on illicit distillation from day to day. There need be no fear of illicit distillation on a large scale being carried on at some place for use of the industrial classes in industrial centres. It will be impossible to carry on such a process for any length of time without detection.

There will be necessity for maintaining a preventive establishment and it will certainly have to be paid sufficiently high to be above the temptations to levy illegal exactions. One may say that such temptations do exist even now and will always exist in all branches of public services. This is, therefore, not a novel difficulty peculiar to prohibition alone. Again, the present establishment has to do a double duty—

(1) Preventive.

(2) Controlling the shops.

It will be relieved of the latter and hence there will be hardly any necessity for strengthening the present staff.

(*e*) If people really take to other intoxicants, it will be a comparatively small number of confirmed drunkards. A large majority of the drunkards will be kept away from the temptations of liquor without falling into the meshes of any other intoxicants. Assuming that people do take to other intoxicants, the prohibitionist will not be deterred by that but will extend prohibition to those intoxicants also.

6.—Prohibition will be effective even in the present generation, but I do believe that the prohibition will be much more effective in the next generation than in the present. That is, the effects of the prohibition will be more marked than those even now. Even assuming that prohibition may not save many a drunkard by weaning them from their drink habit, it will prevent the innocent younger generation from falling a prey to the drink evil.

7.—Prohibitive legislation is the only means in my opinion. The only other alternative will be strong determination by the people to abstain from the drink evil, but this is not feasible. So long as drink traffic is there, there will always remain a section interested in its promotion and will always try all sorts of means to entrap the innocent. The weak will always succumb to the temptations. Force of public opinion, lectures, magic lanterns and other propaganda will be of supplementary value, even after prohibition legislation, (1) to persuade the drunkards not to resort to any illicit methods, if they have been doing as slaves of a habit and (2) to facilitate the work of the preventive establishment by hearty co-operation from the people.

8.—Yes, I would even, if I could, try to extend it to all intoxicants with proper safeguards for allowing their use for medicinal purposes.

9.—Answers to previous questions will show that in my view absolute prohibition is both feasible and desirable. I do not believe in controlling consumption from any standpoint other than that of realising maximum revenue from " the weakness of the people ". If it is to be reduced gradually to *nil*, then it means taking definite steps towards prohibition. I have already made some suggestions in answer to question (3) and others are considered in question (10) below.

10.—On expressing my opinion on the suggestions made in this question as well as in making other suggestions I may not be understood to give up total prohibition as the first best remedy. The means suggested in question 10 are half-hearted measures which will not do any good as the first best remedy. With these remarks I may proceed :—

(*a*) Shops should be rationed but rationing should be reduced every year by a definite percentage as suggested by me in reply to questions 2 and 3.

(*b*) I do not favour increase of price. So long as you are not prohibiting drink any increase in price would mean incentive to illicit production, distribution as well as adulteration. It would also mean that fall in Government revenue would not be proportionate to the reduction in consumption and there will always thus continue to be present the difficulty

of adjusting the finances, if reduction is to be carried out beyond a certain minimum or to *nil*. It would also leave Excise officers to view the question more from the financial point of view, and other intentions will merely remain as pious ones expressed on paper.

(*c*) This should be immediately done. There should be a limit of the number of shops in an area. The limit may be fixed on the population basis, say, one shop for a population of one lakh of souls. It should also be provided that no two liquor shops should be within the radius of one mile. At present shops are situated very near each other, sometimes only five minutes walk.

(*d*) Liquor shops should not be opened before 8-30 a.m. and must be closed after sunset. During the day they should be closed from 11-30 to 1-30. This should particularly be the case in towns and industrial centres. Shops should be closed on Sundays or some one day in a week, which is generally observed as a holiday in a part of the district, and also on public holidays. In industrial centres they should be closed on days when labourers are paid their salaries. Large employers of labour can be requested to fix certain days for wages. In Sholapur I am informed shops are closed on days when the mills make the fortnightly payment of wages. Such a practice could easily be introduced in Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Broach, Surat, Nadiad, Bombay and other industrial centres.

(*e*) This should also be done. I believe the lower strength will prevent fresh recruits from being slaves to the habit and the confirmed may have opportunity of gradually giving it up. The strength should be 60 U.P. and 30 U.P., and 40 U.P. should be absolutely prohibited.

(*f*) There should not be a shop in a locality where a majority of people do not desire to have any. Abkari Committee (instead of the present Advisory Committee) for deciding location of shops should be formed by election from among the elected members of the municipalities and the local boards for the area, and their decisions should be made binding on the Excise authorities in the various methods suggested as means in question 10, except (*b*) and (*j*). The Committee should also have the power to inquire into the illicit sales and breach of conditions of the licenses granted.

(*g*) Direct prohibition or restriction of importation of foreign liquor may perhaps raise questions of Imperial policy, but this can be done indirectly by restricting the grant of licenses and rationing the maximum that could be sold as a condition of the license. Such restriction should be on the lines suggested by (*a*) and (*c*) above. All the restrictions which would apply to indigenous liquor shops should equally apply to foreign liquor.

(*h*) This should be done particularly with regard to foreign liquor. Otherwise, whatsoever is gained by reducing consumption of country liquor will be lost by increased consumption of foreign liquor.

(*i*) The age limit should be 18 instead of 14 as at present. The age of majority under the general law is 18. In case of liquor *that limit at least* should be kept, if not a higher age limit.

(*j*) I do not believe in temperance. There should be total abstinence. In any case, whatever money Government can afford should be used in reducing the consumption of liquor rather than subsidising temperance association. When it is entirely in the hands of the Government to stop a mischief by prohibition, it seems inconsistent on the one hand to keep temptations and on the other hand to attempt to encourage the people to keep away from them. The easier and more direct way would be to remove the temptations altogether. Any Temperance Association doing good work will surely attract the necessary financial help from the public.

(*k*) Removal of liquor from shops should be absolutely prohibited and quantity served on the premises should be also restricted to a maximum of 5 ounces to one person in any one day. Such restrictions should be made a condition in the license which should be liable to forfeiture on breach of the condition.

11.—Yes. There must be some method of knowing and enforcing the wishes of the people of the different localities in respect of liquor-shops. Votes may be recorded along with the municipality and local board elections, or the same voters' list should be utilised for ascertaining the wishes of the population. If Committees, such as those suggested in reply to question 10 (*f*), are formed, they will be fairly representative and occasions to refer to votes directly will be very rare.

12.—Yes. Local bodies should be invested with the power of determining the number and the location of shops in their respective areas. I am not in favour of making them directly responsible for the loss of revenue to the Government. The reasons are :—

(1) There is no guarantee to a local body that either Government or the neighbouring local body will not locate or reduce or remove the shops already located just outside the local limits of its area. In such circumstances, while the local body cannot carry out its objects of reducing drink evil, it will have something to pay as loss, though loss may ultimately have been very little or *nil*. being compensated for on account of shops just outside

its area. I urge this standpoint, because the areas under local bodies would be very small, not living any practical distinctions between boundary lines and interior tracts, and

(2) ascertainment of the loss will be a very complicated matter almost incapable of just ascertainment.

13.—In my opinion, the institution of the Advisory Committee has not been useful. I have already suggested in answers to previous questions wholly elected committees which would not be merely advisory but controlling committees. But here again I may remark that questions 11, 12 and 13 proceed on the assumption that the controlling of consumption will meet the situation. Controlling consumption and all the measures suggested in answers to those questions with that end in view cannot solve the real problem. Nothing short of a bold policy of prohibition *at any cost* will meet the situation. The earlier it is done the lesser the difficulty.

14.—The evil of drink does undoubtedly contribute to increase in crime. That it does so directly can be seen from the large number of petty cases of hurt, affray, etc., occurring at the times of holi and other big festivals and "melas", when the working classes and the lower classes resort to drink. It is noteworthy that liquor shops are closed in the City of Bombay during Mohorrum and Holi holidays. The evil also indirectly promotes crime by inducing many other forms of vice. Prohibition would save a good deal of expense incurred for the maintenance of the police, magistracy and jails by enabling the Government to reduce the strength of those services. Drinking has also an effect on the output of work. The decay of general health and mental derangement limits the capacity for higher proficiency in skilled labour and also affects the efficiency of the worker. It is the usual experience that the usually sober man puts in more and better work than a habitual drinker.

15.—The next result of my recommendations is absolute extinction of excise revenue in a period of five years by reducing consumption to the extent of 20 per cent. every year. This would mean that the Government would get five years time to adjust the finances.

Taking the average revenue at 3,50,00,000 we have to provide for a loss of—

70,00,000 for the first year.
1,40,00,000 for the second year.
2,10,00,000 for the third year.
2,80,00,000 for the fourth year.
3,50,00,000 for the fifth and subsequent years.

The question of finances cannot be adequately dealt with in all the details in a little note like this by way of answers; and I believe that is not what is expected also. I would therefore attempt broad suggestions only.

The question assumes that the loss could be made up by additional income only. I would suggest that it should be met with in the first instance by an all-round retrenchment in expenditure and additional sources of income may be looked for and tapped only when they are thoroughly satisfied that no further economy is possible and that the retrenchment effected falls short of the loss to be made up.

In my humble view, the higher services are being overliberally paid. In no country of the world can a parallel be found. I won't grudge paying for services absolutely necessary in the interest of the country. But such services should be only of experts. I believe, for the civil administration it is not necessary to import foreign agency at such a high cost and allowances. I know the question of their salaries is a non-votable item under the Government of India Act, but if salaries could not be reduced so as to make the burden bearable by India, the only other course is to reduce the number of posts the salaries whereof are non-votable. I do not know whether such a reduction also is non-votable but, if India is really to have responsible self-Government, she must have freedom to adjust her internal affairs to the needs of her finances. The salaries with their allowances need therefore be revised by such legislature as may have the power to do so.

The votable salaries could be reduced by the Council. The high cost of living was the main ground of the revision of salaries, but the persons hardest hit are those who were getting merely living wages, *i. e.*, the lower subordinate services. The higher services have no doubt been affected by the higher cost of living, but that is living limited only to the extent of their savings and luxuries. One notices the higher standard of general living due to higher salaries of higher posts. While I would wish them to enjoy their higher standard and also to be as little affected as possible in their savings and luxuries, I believe the condition of our finances is such, and sure to be such as days pass on, as to justify a reduction in the best interests of the masses. I would therefore propose a general reduction of 20 per cent. in the revisions made in respect of posts carrying the salaries of Rs. 500 per mensem and above.

There is also a need of substantial reduction in travelling allowances in particular. Officers who are entitled to double First Class and Second Class are not really spending as much during their travels. They are getting substantial salaries for the service they render and there is no necessity for supplementing their emoluments by payments of double First Class and Second Class fares.

By the very nature of these proposals it is not possible to state approximately the savings effected.

There would be many items of small expenditure which could be dispensed with. I may point out that substantial saving could be effected by discontinuing the migration to Mahableshwar. The hill journey and the travelling allowances alone come to Rs. 70,000.

*Special Savings.*—By the extinction of excise revenue Government will be automatically relieved from the following payments :—

1,55,000 contribution to local boards in view of one anna cess on excise revenue.

1,43,750 contribution to Bombay Municipality.

The above proposals are obviously rough and also vague but they are intended more to indicate the lines than as cut and dry proposals. The Retrenchment Committee will, it is hoped, carry out retrenchment to the above extent after considering all the details in regard to every post, every establishment and every item of expenditure.

*Direct Taxation.*—If, even after retrenchment, it is found necessary that there should be fresh taxes to meet any deficit, I believe ways and means can be found out. At present the three and a half crores of excise revenue to Government mean a dead loss of at least five times as much to the public and I do not think the public, which will be saving by means of prohibition all this loss, will grudge to part with a small fraction of it to save the whole. A tax on entertainments like the one recently proposed or *a tax on factory wage earners in industrial centres*, or any other methods may then be thought out. Attempting to look at new sources without first carrying out all the possible retrenchment will, in my opinion, render any attempt at retrenchment quite futile.

16.—I have no special remarks to offer. I would prohibit their use except for medicinal purposes.

17.—The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent to a large extent. I have noticed many cases among the working classes and other classes. The opium is not taken in crude form but given in the form of what is popularly known as " bal-goli " (infantpill) in Gujarathi. This custom is, I believe, largely responsible for the high death rate among children.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. GOVERDHAN PATEL replied to the President :—" In the process of reducing the consumption of liquor to *nil*, I would make some provision for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, though I am not for it. The coupon system may be tried in their case.

" If prohibition is applied to mill hands, production will be increased to the extent of 10 to 15 per cent.

" About three-fourths of the total excise revenue in Ahmedabad is derived from the four shops situated in mill areas.

" A tax on employees will not make up the whole deficit, but I would ask the employers to spend something for temperance work.

" Consumption of liquor has increased, because the facilities have increased, and the desire to drink more is created by high wages as well as laxity of morals for want of education ; but it is due more to increased wages.

" The licensees, positively in some cases, sell liquor to young boys. Sometimes it is sold in big pots, and the pots are allowed to be taken away. It is to their interest to sell more. The licensees will continue making profits even under the ration system. I would never advise the mill-owners taking up the whole business themselves. The conditions in India and Germany are not the same. In Germany, beer is drunk like water, whereas in India even a drop of it would be considered pollution. Mill-owners cannot become a party to drink which is a vice by taking over the business ; moreover it will not eradicate the evil as effectively as Government action by legislation, which is the best method, failing which the alternative would be gradual curtailment. Legislation is first required, and efforts in other directions may be pursued at the same time. Europeans and Anglo-Indians generally take foreign liquor, and they may be allowed that under certain restrictions. They would never like the taste of the liquors manufactured in this country.

" Consumption increased in 1920, as that was the period when the mill hands got the highest wages and handsome bonuses. During Divali when they receive their bonus, the liquor shop records will show that the sales were highest, and the shops should be closed during those days, as well as on pay days and holidays.

" Though as the result of prohibition there be an increase in the output of work in the mills, mill-owners should not be taxed further, because automatically all other taxes which they have to pay, such as cotton excise duty, customs duty on mill stores and machinery parts, income tax, super-tax, etc., will be proportionately increased.

" If on account of the stoppage of the liquor traffic labour becomes more efficient and the profits of millowners increase more than the amount of tax paid by them in the shape of excise, customs and income and super-tax, I would not be in favour of making them pay a further tax on those profits. "

To Mr. Madan :—" I have suggested a tax on factory wage-earners to make up the deficit caused by prohibition. I would not recommend that this tax should be collected from women and children. More of the tax should be put on those people who drink, but I would fix a minimum of Re. 1 to be paid by every adult male labourer in mills and factories. The tax would be collected by millowners from the mill-hands and paid into the Government treasury. For the purpose of ascertaining the classes who drink the opinion of millowners from various centres should be collected, and Government should decide as to which class should be asked to pay more. I do not think the tax should be more than Re. 1 per adult head per month. There are in all about 45,000 labourers in the factories and mills in Ahmedabad and the tax collected from them would be Rs. 12 per head per annum, or Rs. 5,50,000. I think the balance of the loss of 9 lakhs from liquor revenue would be made up to Government by the increased revenue from mills by way of customs, excise and income tax. Taxes may also be levied on *beedies*. I would not vary the tax according to the income of the labourer. Every one who gets Rs. 22 or more per month should pay the tax. In the initial stage I would have all pay a uniform rate of Re. 1, but if later it is found that more revenue is necessary I would vary the rate according to income ; but in no case it should exceed Rs. 1-8-0. At present all the 45,000 labourers in Ahmedabad will pay the tax, as all of them get not less than Rs. 30 each.

" I am managing only a small weaving mill, employing 150 hands. The average absenteeism is 5 to 7 per cent. The percentage is small because I am employing largely Mahomedans. It is in the spinning sheds that we find classes who are more accustomed to drink. Even though I am employing largely Mahomedans in the weaving shed I find that about 75 of the 150 are habituated to drink. Non-drinkers absent themselves only on the occasion of festivities.

" In urban areas I do not think local option would be effective if it is applied only to a part of the town. It should be applied to the whole town.

" I should not think that in rural areas people should be asked to make up the revenue if they want prohibition in their areas, because I do not think that any increased prosperity would justify further taxes on the agriculturists. "

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—" I admit that there are about 20,000 cart drivers, porters, etc., in Ahmedabad who also drink. But I would not tax them unless I know by what method they are going to be taxed. I believe that it would be very difficult to tax them. My suggestion that the drinking class labourers should be taxed more than the non-drinking classes to make up the deficit caused by prohibition, would not work injustice on the descendants of the drinking classes twenty years after, when there will be no drinking in the country, because I do not want that the tax I have suggested should be levied for more than twenty years. By that time Government should be able to find other ways and means to meet their expenditure. I advocate the tax only as a temporary measure. I do think that the whole country would benefit if it goes dry, but I do not think it would be right to ask the whole of it to make up the deficit. The minimum of income, Rs. 22, which I have suggested for the tax on factory wage-earners may be varied from town to town according to the income of the labourers in each town, but in no case would I suggest that incomes below Rs. 20 should be taxed. I would not lower the minimum or raise it, even if the wages fall or rise.

" I would exclude Anglo-Indians, Parsis and Europeans from prohibition. I do not think that Hindus should be exempted from prohibition, because I think drink is an evil to them. I admit that it is also an evil to the Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Parsis, but I would first confine my efforts to my people. Parsis are our own people, no doubt, but I find that it is the Parsi community that are running liquor shops in prominent places. Moreover, in the case of the European community they have been accustomed to liquor for hundreds of years ; but the Hindu community have contracted this habit only recently.

" I am aware that Patidars do not drink, and although I cannot say that they are turning out more work than the drinking classes at present, I believe we ought to get more production from the non-drinking than from the drinking classes. I think that efficiency will be increased by 10 to 15 per cent., if labourers do not drink. I have not seen women in my mill drinking. I have heard of the men getting their children to carry liquor for them from the shop and the children drinking part of that liquor. In 1920, as I remember, we did represent to the Collector about it, and some of the shops were closed for some time, but no shops were removed.

" There is no strict supervision over the shops ; some of the inspectors themselves are for getting more revenue, and the department is run more with an eye to revenue. During the time when picketing was going on many offences were committed.

" I should consider taxing necessities of life like Burma rice used by the mill-hands both impracticable and unsound, and they also will object to it, although they may save more by stopping drinking. The excess profits tax was a special war-measure, but simply because a man saves more, you cannot ask him to contribute to the public exchequer a greater amount.

" In some of the mills vegetable tallow is used on religious grounds ; others use animal tallow, but they should not do it if they are Jains. Even supposing they do such a wrong thing, there is no reason why they should do another wrong thing by taking over the excise business."

To Dr. Patil :—" The mill-hands in Ahmedabad come from outside and are mostly abstainers. They are tempted by the presence of the liquor shops, and if the shops were removed there would be less consumption. I am in favour of the resolution passed by the all-India Industrial Welfare Conference, regarding liquor. The mill-hands generally drink to excess whenever they get an opportunity. We have not done anything for their welfare in the matter of temperance beyond giving them opportunities to have meetings of their own in the mills, and holidays to enjoy themselves.

" Some of the mills have got their chawls for their work-people, but there are some mill-hands who like to reside in their own rooms even when accommodation in the chawls is available, while some of the mills have no accommodation in the mills.

" Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai has opened creches in his mills and 5 or 6 other mills have followed his example.

" I do not know of the orders issued in Baroda for not interfering with the drinking habits of the people, but I have read that Bhavnagar and Limbdi have gone in for total prohibition. The Chamber of Princes offers a basis for co-operation among the Indian States on this question, and some influence might be brought to bear upon them. "

No. 91.

REPLIES OF RAO BAHADUR RAMANBHAI MAHIPATRAM NILKANTH, B.A., LL.B., M.L.C., CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT, AHMEDABAD MUNICIPALITY.

1. The replies are given by the Committee of Management, Ahmedabad Municipality.

2. (*a*) The excise policy laid down by the Government of India may not be wrong in its purpose but it is not adequate, inasmuch as it does not pay regard to the fact that the facilities it affords to what is called use of alcohol in moderation leads to its use in excess leading to ruin large numbers who become addicted to excessive indulgence. As regards the policy of raising the tax on liquor as high as possible it may be observed that, though the object underlying the policy is a good one, the policy has not tended to reduce the consumption of liquor as shown by the figures of sale, while it has increased the strain on the resources of the drunkard and his family. Neither has the restriction in the number of liquor shops succeeded in decreasing consumption.

Further, though the object of Government is to see that the liquor offered for sale is of good quality, complaints of adulteration by vendors are not infrequent.

(*b*) The policy has not resulted in putting an effective check on intemperance. The actual results of the policy as carried out in practice have not been satisfactory.

3. Till it becomes possible to prohibit manufacture, sale and importation of liquor, there should be greater restriction and control on consumption. For this purpose the means suggested under question 10 may be adopted, dry areas may be constituted, local option may be allowed, and other measures suggested in answer to question 10 may be employed.

4. This board is in favour of total prohibition. Because, until the manufacture, sale and importation is totally prohibited, the widespread vice of drunkenness will not disappear, and the physical, moral and economic ruin it entails will continue. This board believes that total prohibition is a practical measure if it is fixed as the goal to be finally reached by gradual and definite steps within a period of certain years. For this purpose, the sale of liquor in each place should be rational, the quantity allowed annually being diminished each year by a certain percentage.

5. Replies to the objections urged in this question are as under :—

(*a*) Illicit distillation will have to be checked and punished. Besides the removal of the temptation offered by liquor shop, the temperance propaganda will have greater success.

(*b*) Measures should be adopted to prevent illicit importation from neighbouring Indian States, Portuguese territory and British districts. Some Indian States have already adopted total prohibition and the force of public opinion may be trusted to prevail upon all Indian States and the Portuguese Government. The example of the Bombay Presidency may be left to be followed by other Presidencies.

(*c*) The customs and habits of certain classes which lead them to drink will wear away gradually in the increasing prohibition supplemented by temperance propaganda. Prohibition is not likely to create any serious discontent among such classes. Some of them are known to have voluntarily adopted prohibition of drink. If state prohibition creates some discontent, the discontent will not last long.

(*d*) A preventive establishment will have certainly to be maintained to cope adequately with illicit distillation and the state must be prepared to incur such expenditure for the well-being of the people. Illegal exactions on the part of the preventive establishment must be dealt with in the same way as illegal exactions by other establishments are dealt with.

(*e*) Prohibition must extend to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs also.

6. The board agrees with the opinion that whatever might be said against the effectiveness of prohibition in the present generation it is certain to have a large influence in the next.

7. Prohibitive legislation is essentially necessary. To supplement it, facilities for recreation and refreshment of those who indulge in drink must be provided on a large scale so as to form counter-attractions.

8. The principle of prohibition must be applied to all liquors whether distilled or fermented. Fresh toddy need not be prohibited.

9. Absolute prohibition gradually brought about is feasible and desirable. Till this is attained the means suggested in question no. 10 and the further measures suggested in answer thereto may be adopted.

10. This board is in favour of the measures suggested in this question. The following proposals are made in connection with these measures :—

(*a*) The supply of liquors to each shop should be decreased every year by a fixed percentage.

(*b*) The price of liquor should be increased from year to year, but the increase should be so limited that the price of country liquor may never be higher than that of foreign liquor of low quality. This would avert the danger of poor people resorting to the use of such foreign liquor.

(*c*) The programme of reducing the number of liquor shops should be so timed that by the time rationing of shops under clause (*a*) abolishes supply of liquor all shops in the locality may be closed.

(*d*) The hours of sale at shops should be cut down as far as possible. All shops should be closed on general holidays, on fair and market days and in places where there are mills and factories on the pay days of such mills and factories if all those institutions have common pay days.

(*e*) The strength of liquor should in all cases be reduced to 60° U.P.

(*f*) No liquor shop should be allowed to be located within a fixed distance of a mill, factory, school, big market, place of worship largely visited, or another liquor shop.

(*g*) The importation of foreign liquor should be prohibited or restricted by heavy import duty. No new license should be given for the sale of foreign liquor. Existing licenses should be gradually withdrawn within a fixed period.

(*h*) Licenses issued to restaurants, refreshment rooms, etc., should allow the sale of such quantities as may be reasonably required for consumption by Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Parsis.

(*i*) Licenses should provide that liquor should not be sold to persons below the age of 18.

(*j*) Subsidies may be given to temperance societies to enable them to employ paid lecturers and give magic lantern demonstration.

(*k*) More than half a bottle should not be allowed to be sold to any one person on any day.

Besides these means, the board suggests the following :—

(*l*) Liquor should not be sold to women.

(*m*) New dry areas should be established every year on the lines suggested under clause (*d*) above.

(*n*) Temperance primers should be introduced in schools in order to instil the evil effects of alcohol on young minds.

11. This board is in favour of local option. Votes of all adults in small wards may be taken on voting papers, illiterate persons being asked orally.

12. This board is in favour of investing local bodies with the powers of determining the number and location of shops in their areas. But this board is not in favour of making such local bodies responsible for raising any part of the revenue that may be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers.

13. The existing Advisory Committees have not been able to do appreciably useful work as the Committees have an official majority and as their recommendations are not obligatory. If the power of giving licenses and determining the number and location of liquor shops is not given to local bodies, these powers should be given to the Executive Advisory Committees which should have an elected majority, the Collector being President. There should be such a Committee for every district town and every taluka town.

14. The evil of drink contributes to an increase in crime and has its effect on the output of work.

15. The loss of excise revenue may be made up by a license tax on trades.

16. Prohibition should be applied to opium and hemp drugs also, the sale and use of opium for medical purposes being allowed.

17. The habit of giving opium to children is very prevalent in this part of the country, especially among illiterate and labouring classes. The practice of giving opium (*bal goli*) to infants makes them costive and weak and increases death rate among them. Instances are not wanting of opium poisoning among infants and children due to over-dose of the drug.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Rao Bahadur NILKANTH replied to the President :—" I have done some temperance work myself. Propaganda has its good effects, but they are washed away on account of the presence of the liquor shops.

" If 70 per cent. of the people in a locality are in favour of having no shop in their locality, their voice ought to prevail. This opinion should be ascertained by the local advisory committees and temperance associations of some standing, every adult man and woman having the right to vote. It would not create any discontent among the drinking classes.

" I had witnessed some picketing scenes, and there were complaints that there were breaches of the excise law by the shopkeepers, but I was not able to verify any.

" I have been a member of the advisory committee for more than 10 years. Its meetings are called hardly twice or thrice a year. Now-a-days, the practice is to collect opinion by correspondence. I do not consider that that is an effective way of doing business. We have had no instructions from Government ever since we were appointed as to what our duties are. There ought to be a change, but I recognise that there is one difficulty. We have been told that the administration is in the hands of Government, and that if the excise advisory committee becomes executive, there will be conflict. I would therefore associate the committee with the Collector in deciding questions. In case of a difference of opinion between the Collector and the committee, and if the Collector does not agree with the committee's decision, which generally ought to be binding upon him, he should state his reasons in writing, and submit the case to Government. It would be better if definite duties were assigned to these committees.

" The advisory committees should be four-fifths elected, the election to be made by municipalities in urban areas and by local boards in rural areas. In urban areas I would also give the vote to recognised associations like the Millowners Association, the Chamber of Commerce, and the temperance association. I have not heard of any representative of the liquor trade being appointed on these committees, and I would not now like it to be done, because that is an interested party by itself.

" I am for gradual prohibition, allowing local option in the intermediate stage by a referendum to the people, both men and women being given the right to vote.

" There should be separate units of areas in this matter. In cities, I would have municipal or some other wards which could be the units. For a district, we might take those groups which elect for the local boards or some other grounds must be formed. They must be homogeneous in the sense of the local board groups, and each group should have its own local option.

" My idea is that prohibition ought to begin by rationing the quantity in a district each year, to be reduced by 5 or 10 per cent. each year, and reducing the shops by local option. Prohibition may then come by executive order. But in that case Government would have the power at any time to revive the sale of liquor. Therefore, after considerable progress has been made by the operation of local option and by rationing, there should be a law which will make it illegal to manufacture or sell liquor, including the importation of foreign liquor, due provision being made for the registration of Europeans, Anglo-Indians, etc., and the supply to them of liquor on the coupon system. In a sense prohibition is undue interference with liberty, but for the general welfare of the community it is permissible.

" I am not for imposing a tax on incomes between Rs. 250 and Rs. 2,000, as it would impose a tax on the temperate as well the intemperate people, and that would be rather hard.

" I would suggest that every workman and artisan in the city should be registered with a view to their income being ascertained and every income above Rs. 1,000 should be taxed. I would not tax incomes below Rs. 1,000 until it is found impossible otherwise to meet the deficit.

" I am the Chairman of the Temperance Association of Ahmedabad "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I want reduction in the number of liquor shops to be carried out along with reduction in the quantity of liquor because mere reduction of the number of shops does not reduce consumption proportionately.

" As regards hours of sale, I would like to close liquor shops one hour after the closing time of the mills. If this leads to any rush at the liquor shop resulting in some people not getting liquor, I do not think it would be a disadvantage; that would, on the contrary, have the effect of checking consumption by inducing people not to go there."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—" I have made an exception in the case of Anglo-Indians, Europeans and Parsis in my scheme of prohibition, because being educated communities they should be allowed to determine the question for themselves. Moreover, Europeans are foreigners and as in their country they are not prevented from taking liquor, they should be allowed to have it here also. I would not advocate this exemption in the case of the Bhils, because I do not think they are an enlightened community. I admit that there may be administrative difficulties and anomalies in allowing one community to take liquor and not allowing others, and if there are such administrative difficulties I have no objection to prohibition being applied to all communities. If as a temporary measure Europeans cannot be exempted, I have no objection to prohibition being enforced against them also.

" I have no objection to the work of collecting any additional taxes imposed by Government to make up the deficit caused by prohibition in a municipal area being thrown on the municipality, provided the cost of that collection is paid over to the municipality by Government. I am against taxing food grains. Luxuries may be taxed. I agree that indirect taxation will be difficult to be found out by the people.

" I cannot say that there will be any appreciable advantage if the excise officials appointed by Government are all teetotallers, beause it is not their habits that promote drink. The reason

why drink is promoted now is that these officials are over-zealous in getting more revenue to Government, because they hope to get promotion by that."

*Q.* If the shops are run by Government or the municipalities through Government servants, do you think that it will help temperance ?—*A.* I would not like the municipalities to touch liquor, and I may say that departmental officials of Government are bad business people.

*Q.* But the policy of Government is not to get more revenue: the idea is to supply drink to those who want it in moderation ?—*A.* If that is so, then let Government do it. I think it will help temperance.

*Q.* Would you allow recognised temperance societies to be entrusted with the task of selling liquor, so as to avoid infringement of excise rules ?—*A.* Temperance societies would not be willing to run these shops. I would leave that to be done departmentally by Government.

To Dr. Patil :—" I have not seen liquor being served to children, but I have seen children drunk. If toddy becomes alcoholic, I would prevent that also. "

No. 92.

REPLIES OF DR. JOSEPH BENJAMIN OF AHMEDABAD.

1. Profession—medical practitioner of 40 years' standing. Both as a medical man and as one who has worked in the cause of temperance for about 30 years, as well as in the capacity of Honorary Secretary of the Ahmedabad Total Abstinence Association for more than 20 years and a member of the Local Excise Advisory Committee for more than 13 years, I have had frequent opportunities of forming an opinion on the questions indicated below.

2. The Government of India say in their Resolution, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 that they have no desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation and it is necessary in their opinion to make due provision for the needs of such persons. In the first place, it is not understood what Government mean by the word "moderation" as Government have no means to know who take liquor in moderation or in excess. Though the object of Government to reduce drinking by raising the taxation on liquor may be good, the results have not been favourable and the raising of the taxation on liquor has not tended to the diminution of the consumption of liquor among the people, as the figures of sale of liquor show. As regards the restriction of the number of shops, though Government have reduced the number of shops, consumption has not decreased owing to want of proper supervision on the part of supervising officers. The said Government policy has not put an effective check on intemperance.

3. Personally I would like to see all liquor shops closed. But if Government are not prepared to do so, I would suggest that instead of the shops being licensed as at present Government should carry on these shops departmentally, and keep country liquor in sealed half-pint bottles, not allowing anybody to drink on the premises. By doing so, the excessive drinking that is seen among people attending these shops will be lessened. Besides, it will prevent the persons carrying on these shops from adulterating liquor or giving short measures, both of which practices are common under the present licensing system. I would add that at present persons can not only drink on the premises but can also take liquor with them. Thus the "on" and the "off" systems are both in existence at country liquor shops.

In the case of foreign liquor the "Off" system has been in practice for several years in this Presidency in most of the shops without any ill effects resulting therefrom. There is therefore no reason why the same system should not be introduced in the case of country liquor in this Presidency. The "Off" system has been tried in some parts of the Punjab and has proved successful, as the figures of sale have decreased thereby. It has also been found to have been successful in Scandinavia and other countries in Europe. It is said that by the "Off" system, there will be drunkenness at home. But as both the Hindu and the Mahomedan religions strictly prohibit the use of alcohol, many persons will not have the courage to take liquor home. Thus, they will naturally be prevented from drinking liquor.

There are others, it is said, who will take liquor outside and drink at all places, such as gardens, river-beds, etc., and that whereas the Police are now able to keep control near the liquor shops, it will be difficult for them to keep control everywhere. My answer to the above objection is that there will be less drunkenness outside, as people are afraid to drink in the presence of others who do not drink, and consequently there will be no necessity for additional supervision on the part of the Police as regards such people.

For the purpose of reducing consumption of liquor, it is necessary to declare areas dry one after another, to introduce local option, to give powers to the Excise Advisory Committees, which should be on a more elective basis, as regards the granting and cancelling of licenses and opening and closing of shops, to restrict the hours of sale, not to allow any shops to exist near any mill, factory, school, market, high road, or place of worship, and not to allow more than half bottle of country liquor to any person on any one day, to close all shops on all public holidays and fair and market days, to prohibit the sale of liquor to women, only 60° U. P. liquor to be supplied for sale at the country liquor shops, no temporary shops to be allowed at fairs, and that local option be given effect to.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition, because I have seen the deleterious effects of alcohol upon families and upon a large number of families among certain castes, who have been ruined by drink. Among the mill hands also drink has caused great harm.

I consider it to be a practical measure. During the riots here and mill strikes all the country shops were closed for nearly two months at a time, and the people could do without drink.

I would suggest that all shops for the sale of liquor and intoxicating drugs should be closed, only the use of opium being restricted to medicinal purposes.

5. (*a*) Government need not be afraid of there being illicit distillation. If along with the closing of shops people are shown the ill effects of alcohol by moral persuasion, the chances for illicit distillation will be much lessened. Besides, Government should do their part of duty in saving the people from this vice.

(*b*) As regards the proximity of Indian States, Government should bring their moral influence to bear on all Indian States and the Portuguese territory in the matter. Some of the Indian States in Kathiawar such as Bhavnagar, Limbdi, and Gondal have already introduced prohibition in their States, and I am sure if Government set an example in the matter many other States will follow suit.

As regards the neighbouring British districts, if all the Provincial Governments introduce prohibition at one and the same time, the objection will disappear. Even if other Presidencies do not do it simultaneously, there is no reason why the Bombay Presidency should not take the lead in the matter.

(*c*) The objection that there is possibility of serious iscontent among certain classes if prohibition is adopted is untenable, as it has been found of late that even among the Bhils, etc., in different parts of Gujarat several castes have resolved not to drink liquor. It is the prime duty of Government to save its subjects of all classes from ruin from this vice.

(*d*) Government need not engage a large establishment for the purpose, but ask for the co-operation of leaders of various castes to help them in the matter.

(*e*) If a check on other intoxicants and deleterious drugs is also placed, the probability of people taking to these drugs will be lessened.

6. I support the opinion.

7. Of course, prohibitive legislation would be the only and the most effective means to stop total consumption of liquor. I have frequently heard people say that if the temptations in their way are removed by the closing of all liquor shops, they would not drink at all. To supplement legislative action, the introduction of counter-attractions, such as tea-shops, light refreshment rooms and amusements, etc., would help to gain the object.

8. Yes, except fresh toddy.

9. In case Government do not adopt the policy of prohibition, I am in favour of adopting all the means mentioned in question 10 to control the consumption of liquor, except the means mentioned under (*k*) as regards which I have given my opinion in answer to question 2. I would add to the means suggested one more, *viz.*, prohibiting the sale of liquor to women.

10. There should be 10 per cent. decrease every year in the supply of liquor to these shops.

Every year the number of these shops should be reduced so that in ten years' time all the shops may be closed. The hours of sale should be from 4 p.m. to sunset and all shops should be closed on Sundays and holidays. The strength of all liquors should be reduced to 60° U. P.

No shops should be allowed to be near a mill, factory, school, market, high-road, or place of worship, and no shop should be within 220 yards of another. The importation of foreign liquor should be prohibited or restricted by heavy import duty, and no new licenses should be granted for the sale of foreign liquor in the Presidency, and the old licenses should be gradually withdrawn. Licenses should not generally be given to refreshment rooms, dining cars, etc. Liquor should not be sold to any person below the age of 18.

Subsidies may be given to Temperance Societies for the purpose of employing paid lecturers for the mill hands and masses and for opening tea shops and starting counter-attractions in the shape of innocent amusements for them.

As regards the restricting or prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops, I am of opinion it would be best if there were prohibition both against drinking on the premises or against removing liquor outside. But as at present, persons are allowed to carry liquor outside in addition to their drinking on the premises, I would personally prefer the former to the latter for the reasons already given by me under answer to question 3. In addition to the above means it is necessary to instil into the minds of the young generation the evil effects of drink by introducing temperance primers in all the primary and secondary schools in the Presidency.

11. I am in favour of local option. A plebiscite should be taken of all adults in a locality and their opinion taken by giving a voting paper to each.

12. My answer is "Yes" to the first, and "No" to the second sentence, because owing to greater soberness among the people there will be decrease in expenditure on account of Police and medical and other charges, and there will be more income from other sources owing to greater output of work.

13. Owing to an official majority and owing to their being simply advisory, these Committees have not been useful as they should be. They are not frequently consulted and there are a number of instances where their recommendations have not been given effect to. I would suggest that these Committees should consist mainly of elected members, that Temperance Societies should be represented thereon, and that they should have the power of granting and cancelling licenses and of regulating the hours of sale and of closing and of opening shops. And the number of these Committees should be increased so that every head quarter and taluka town should have a Committee.

14. The evil of drink does contribute to an increase in crime, and the output of work is less in the case of those who drink than among those who are sober.

15. If prohibition is gradually introduced, the gradual decrease in the revenue from liquor will be compensated by better output of work, giving better prosperity to the people and thus bringing more revenue to Government from other sources.

16. As in the case of liquor, there should be prohibition, except in the case of opium, its use being restricted to medicinal purposes only, or as an alternative there should be restriction on the sale of opium and hemp drugs, the present restrictions on cocaine being continued. At present a person is allowed to purchase one tola of opium, five tolas of ganja, 20 tolas of bhang, 1 tola of charas, and 20 tolas of majum at a time. The quantity of these drugs, except charas which is rightly to be prohibited altogether, should be reduced to ½, 2, 10 and 10 tolas respectively.

17. The habit of giving opium to children is very prevalent here in the villages. and even in the city, chiefly among the classes that are illiterate, both Hindu and Mahomedan.

The custom of giving *bal-goli* and opium to infants and young children is to make them weak, and thus the death-rate among them is increased ; and instances have not beenwanting where deaths have resulted from overdoses of opium.

*Supplement to the answer given to question 13.*

The Local Excise Advisory Committee consists of seven members of whom four are officials, *viz.*, the Collector, who is also the Chairman, the District Superintendent of Police, the Huzur Deputy Collector, and the Assistant or Deputy Collector in charge of Prantij Sub-Division, and the rest three are non-officials, who are elected by the Ahmedabad Municipality. Thus there is is an official majority on the Committee. Besides as the Committee is simply advisory, the Collector has the power to do things as he likes in spite of the specific recommendations of the Committee. The Committees have thus no real voice in deciding matters relating to the closing and opening of shops. It is therefore necessary to put these committees on a really elective basis with an unofficial majority thereon, and the decisions of these Committees should be binding in the matters decided by them. Temperance Associations also should have the right of electing members to these Committees, so that they also should have a voice. As I have stated above, the non-official members are in a minority here, and consequently even when all of them have unanimously expressed their opinion on a certain point it has not on several occasions been given effect to. I give below some concrete instances :—

1. At the first meeting of the Local Excise Advisory Committee held on 9th December 1908, the non-official members very strongly urged the closing of the Hope Market shop on the ground of its being close to a frequented road and of nuisance from the numerous customers. The Chairman (Collector) however decided that the shop must be allowed to remain for the time being.

2. At the second meeting of the Local Excise Advisory Committee held on 13th October 1909 the non-official members recommended the closing of country liquor shops for a few hours on festivals like the Holi and Mohurrum. The Collector however decided that he could not recommend the proposal. At the same meeting the non-official members suggested that the Panch Kuva, Jordan Road, and the Hope Market shops should be removed. The Collector however did not sanction any of the three proposals.

3. The non-official members at the said meeting also pointed out that the number of foreign liquor "off" licenses was unnecessarily large, there being several shops close together.

The Collector however thought "that foreign liquor 'off' licenses do no harm, and there does not seem to be sufficient reason for interfering with old established business".

4. Again at a meeting of the Committee held on 19th July 1916 the non-official members suggested the closing of the Panchkuva, Jordan Road, Hope Market, Railway Suburb, and Madhavpura shops. The Millowners' Association also had sent a representation in the matter.

However, the Collector decided to remove only the Panchkuva and Jordan Road shops to other localities as an experimental measure.

I now give below instances wherein the recommendations of the Local Excise Advisory Committee as passed unanimously or *nem con* in its meetings with the Collector as Chairman were not subsequently given effect to :—

1. At the first meeting of the Local Excise Advisory Committee held on 9th December 1908, it was resolved that "it should be recommended that the Lalkaka Refreshment Room license should be withdrawn."

The Collector however at the next meeting of the Committee held on 15th December 1909 allowed the license to continue, though the Assistant Collector of Excise also was not in favour of continuance of the license. It may here be pointed out that Sir F. S. P. Lely also had in his

memorandum dated 10th January 1904 to the Government of India written against this refreshment room license.

2. On 30th August 1919 it was resolved that the following shops should be removed if possible to other sites :—

1. Market. 2. Madalpur, 3. Railway—Suburb, 4. Panchkuva and 5. Beharampur. However, afterwards the Assistant Collector of Excise sent a letter No. 3204, dated 10th November 1919, to the Collector saying that "no other site was available for the market shop. The shop should therefore be allowed to remain on in the present building for the unexpired term of the license, after which, if it is considered necessary to do so, it may be closed permanently."

It may be pointed out that this shop is near the markets of the city and has the largest sale being more than 22,000 gallons in 1922-23. It is thus a great incentive to persons coming to the markets. People in the neighbourhood also have petitioned to remove the shop on more than one occasion.

Really speaking the Collector should have called a meeting of the Committee to consider the Excise Assistant Collector's letter. However, opinions were invited by circular, and thus the shop still remains where it is, though it is a great nuisance to the public.

3. On April 1921 a meeting of the Excise Advisory Committee was held where the majority of the members gave opinion against the removal of the Raipur liquor shop from its existing site to the site pointed out to the Committee. . However, the Collector sanctioned the removal of the shop to the new locality from 1st April 1922 of his own motion, placing the matter before the Local Excise Advisory Committee afterwards, *viz.*, on 20th April 1922, when naturally sanction was given.

4. On 27th May 1921 the Committee resolved as follows :—"The Committee agrees that the sale of country and foreign liquor should be stopped within Municipal limits as soon as existing commitments terminate or if arrangements can be made at as early a previous date as possible."

No effect has yet been given to the above resolution, though it may be pointed out that the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, has removed all the liquor shops from Amritsar City.

5. At the same meeting it was resolved to close the liquor shops at sunset.

Effect has not yet been given to the above recommendation.

6. At the above mentioned meeting it was also agreed that the committee should contain a popular majority and decide questions regarding the opening and closing of shops, the situation, and the times for opening and closing. No effect has yet been given to the above recommendation.

7. It was also resolved at the meeting that the usefulness of frequent meetings is accepted.

Effect has not yet been given to the above recommendation in its true spirit.

8. At the meeting of the Excise Advisory Committee held on 18th February 1922 it was again resolved that the market shop should be removed.

Effect was not given to the above resolution, the Collector of his own motion allowing the shop to continue from 1st April 1922. I then moved the question in the next meeting of the Local Excise Advisory Committee held on 20th April 1922, when the Committee while agreeing that the Market shop was rather close to the market did not approve of the proposal to thrust it on Raikhad where there is much objection. It may here be pointed out that there formerly existed in Raikhad at the site pointed out by me a country liquor shop which was closed by the Collector himself and that there was no application from the residents of the locality to remove it.

Thus in spite of the protests of the public and the resolutions passed by the Committee on more than one occasion to remove the shop, it has been allowed to continue where it exists at present.

9. The Jordan Road and Behrampur shops were closed by the Collector himself from 1st April 1922, placing the matter before the Committee afterwards on 20th April 1922 when the Committee naturally sanctioned the proposal.

10. During the new year 1923-24 the Collector has sanctioned the reopening the Behrampur shop from 1st April 1923 without placing the matter before the Committee as yet.

It will thus be seen that the committees have no real voice.

It may also be pointed that meetings of the Local Advisory Committee are not regularly held. Sometimes for 3 years no meeting was held, *viz.*, from 1910 to 1913, again, as far as I am aware, for three years from August 1916 to July 1919.

It will not be out of place to mention in this connection that I was twice refused in 1916 copies of the proceedings of the Committee, for which I had applied in my capacity as Honorary Secretary of the Ahmedabad Total Abstinence Association though I was also a member of the Committee, and had been previously and was even subsequently supplied with such copies.

It is therefore hoped that these Committees will be placed on a really effective basis with power to grant licenses, to decide the question of the opening, closing and removing of shops, and to regulate the hours of sale, etc. Temperance societies wherever they exist should also be allowed to have their representatives on these Committees, and that there should be a Committee for every town in the Presidency where there exist liquor shops.

JOSEPH BENJAMIN.

Ahmedabad, 24th April 1923.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Dr. JOSEPH BENJAMIN replied to the President:—"The quantity of liquor that can be taken without appreciable harm will depend on the idiosyncracies of the constitution of each individual. The average consumption (average taken according to the number of drinkers) in Ahmedabad is 6 ounces per head per day.

"I advocate that prohibition may be attained gradually only because of the difficulty of covering the deficit in revenue.

"I have visited shops frequently and I have seen assaults by men on women and by women on men near these shops. I have seen women near the liquor shops drinking. I have also seen children standing near liquor shops. I have not actually seen liquor being sold to children. Liquor should not be sold to women, because their habit is likely to spread to their children.

"I am in favour of local option to be decided by a referendum. I would recommend that if more than 50 per cent. of the voters of a locality, both male and female, vote in favour of prohibition, prohibition should be enforced in that locality. If 50 per cent. is considered too low, you may raise it to 70 per cent.

"I would recommend that our advisory committees should be converted into licensing boards, with powers to close down shops, change the location of shops, to regulate the hours of sale, etc. I would have the Collector as chairman of the committee, with four or five elected members. There should be a four-fifths non-official elected majority. As far as Ahmedabad is concerned, I would like to have three elected by the municipality, one by the Millowners' Association and one by the Temperance Association. I want three to be elected by the municipality because the municipality represents the whole population of Ahmedabad. I would not give the right of veto to the Collector.

"I am in favour of the off-system, because that has been successful in the Punjab in reducing consumption. Many of the Mahomedan and Hindu drinkers would be ashamed to take liquor home.

"I do not think that propaganda will be very much effective unless accompanied by Government measures to remove temptations. I would like revenue officers of Government to take part in temperance propaganda. I would not like the excise officials to take part, because so far as I know their influence has been exerted towards increasing consumption.

"I am not in favour of any sort of eatables, food, or harmless drinks being served in a liquor shop.

"There should be no liquor shop, near a mill, school, high road, temple, or residence of backward classes.

"The Government of India may be asked to give us a share of the increased revenue which they will get as a result of the measures I have suggested.

"Country liquor shops should have no back doors in the case of the on-system.

"In villages where liquor consumption is lowest, the shops should be closed.

"Foreign liquor licenses should be reduced.

"There should be regular meetings of the advisory committees. Consultation by circular does not bring out all the *pros* and *cons* of the question. In Ahmedabad there is a proposal to give a foreign liquor license for a shop in the railway suburb locality.

"If toddy is fresh and it can be used immediately after being drawn, it may be allowed. That which is sold in Ahmedabad is fermented. The Chemical Analyser would be able to say whether any toddy is adulterated or not. It is impossible to get fresh toddy, unless the man gets it near the tree."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai:—"The drinking habit is growing. Mill-hands take to drink by bad company; they are not addicted to the habit in their villages. The Patidars do not drink so much. The Thakarda women drink to some extent. I have not seen any boys or girls under 16 drink by themselves. When Major Dayasagar and myself wanted to visit a shop, the proprietor threatened that he would prosecute us if we entered. There is greater propensity for drink among people born of parents addicted to the habit. The habit is started among the children by the parents. I think maturing makes the liquor stronger. I object to women drinking, as they are the guardians of their children. Under no circumstances should liquor be given to women.

"I would certainly make no distinction between Europeans and Indians in the matter of prohibition.

"If the excise officers are to help temperance workers in their work, the effect would be better if the officers were teetotalers.

"When picketing was going on, though I did not take any part in it myself, I saw one instance where a Parsi used to bring liquor to his house and sell it to people there. The attention of Government officers was drawn to this, but nothing was done, and the excise officials passively sympathised with such offences. I heard from many respectable people that many more offences of that nature were committed.

"I would rather go without education than have the people drink liquor."

To Dr. Patil:—The Ahmedabad Total Abstinence Association has been in existence since 1888, and the cry for prohibition does not, in my opinion, owe its existence to the new movement.

"The off-system will put a stop to a good deal of nuisance on the roads and accidents in cities.

"I do not think the stopping of drink all at once will have any injurious effects. I have noticed that people, both Europeans and Indians, who are addicted to drink, when punished with imprisonment, come out of jail in a better state of health though they are not served liquor there.

"The work of offering counter-attractions should be undertaken by temperance societies, and they should be helped by Government or the public. If the millowners undertake that work, it will be a good thing, though, in Ahmedabad none of them have done that yet.

"In order to meet the deficit, Government should go on reducing their expenditure at the rate of Rs. 40 lakhs a year."

*Statement produced by Dr. Joseph Benjamin showing consumption of country liquor in proof gallons in Ahmedabad City and District from 1911-12 to 1921-22 according to the figures given by the Superintendent of Excise, Ahmedabad, and as given in the printed annual reports.*

| Year.] | Ahmedabad City. | Ahmedabad District excluding City | Total of both. | Figures for the whole District. | Population of the City. | Population of the whole district. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Proof gallons. | Proof gallons. | Proof gallons. | Proof gallons. | | | |
| 1911-12 .. | 46,318 | 24,207 | 70,525 | 75,372 | 214,000 | 827,809 | |
| 1912-13 .. | 45,736 | 22,757 | 68,493 | 71,612 | .. | .. | |
| 1913-14 .. | 50,568 | 26,176 | 76,744 | 80,087 | .. | .. | |
| 1914-15 .. | 54,396 | 29,281 | 83,677 | 87,809 | .. | .. | |
| 1915-16 .. | 65,017 | 11,274 | 76,291 | 79,942 | .. | .. | |
| 1916-17 .. | 69,502 | 14,415 | 83,917 | 87,942 | .. | .. | |
| 1917-18 .. | 76,918 | 19,028 | 95,946 | 102,285 | .. | .. | |
| 1918-19 .. | 66,854 | 15,828 | 82,682 | 89,997 | .. | .. | |
| 1919-20 .. | 62,272 | 17,198 | 79,470 | 87,345 | .. | .. | |
| 1920-21 .. | 74,126 | 16,539 | 90,665 | 90,664 | 270,964 | 890,911 | |
| 1921-22 .. | 69,531 | 11,916 | 71,447 | 88,509 | .. | .. | |

*Statement produced by Dr. Joseph Benjamin showing consumption of foreign liquor from 1911-12 to 1921-22 in the Ahmedabad District according to the figures given by the Superintendent of Excise, Ahmedabad.*

| Year. | Fermented liquors. | Wines and liquors. | Spirits potable. | | Rectified spirits in gallons. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | European manufacture. | Indian manufacture. | | |
| | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | Gallons. | | |
| 1911-12 .. | 1,457 | 583 | 4,025 | .. | .. | In the printed reports of the administration of the Excise Department the figures given are in excess of these figures. |
| 1912-13 .. | 1,448 | 549 | 4,787 | .. | .. | |
| 1913-14 .. | 1,926 | 598 | 5,062 | .. | .. | |
| 1914-15 .. | 1,984 | 536 | 5,499 | .. | Included in potable spirits. | |
| 1915-16 .. | 1,444 | 452 | 5,462 | .. | Do. | |
| 1916-17 .. | 1,780 | 384 | 4,665 | 160 | Do. | |
| 1917-18 .. | 1,447 | 378 | 4,856 | 649 | Do. | |
| 1918-19 .. | 1,671 | 394 | 3,214 | 3,216 | 651 | |
| 1919-20 .. | 3,094 | 421 | 4,867 | 5,359 | 383 | |
| 1920-21 .. | 5,751 | 422 | 12,985 | 1,774 | 300 | |
| 1921-22 .. | 12,672 | 474 | 10,147 | 1,378 | 97 | |

No. 93.

REPLIES OF MR. MAGANBHAI C. PATEL, BAR.-AT-LAW, AHMEDABAD.

1. I am following the profession of lawyer. I had opportunities of forming my opinions on the subject during my practice as a lawyer as well as by my contact with my tenants and other peasants in the district in which I have landed estate.

2. The excise policy of Government as laid down in the extract quoted seems on its face reasonable, but the inherent defects in it are well disclosed in working it out in practice. As the policy has not achieved its avowed purpose, it becomes clear to my mind that there are some elements in it which require a thorough re-examination.

In the very first sentence of the statement of policy quoted there are two distinct ideas put together. First, that the Government should not interfere with those who use alcohol in moderation; and secondly, that it is necessary in the opinion of Government to make due provision for the needs of such persons. Now it is perfectly consistent with the liberty of a person that Government, if they consider that moderate drink is harmless to society, should not interfere with that habit by prohibiting it, and I agree that such interference is certainly outside the duty of Government. There are not good reasons, however, why the second idea also should be a necessary part of the Government excise policy, for surely it could not be the duty of Government to make provision for the needs of even such moderate drinkers, for we have not seen that Government have ever taken care to provide for a supply of good milk or good food stuffs which they have clearly left to private merchants; and it is this second part of the policy to my mind that has defeated the very purpose of it, *viz.*, "to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do." If the purpose would have been effected, then only could have arisen an occasion to test the strength of the intended subordination of all considerations of revenue. As it is, we find that, with the growth of the drink habit among people with increasing excesses in the lower classes of the population, the state revenues arising out of the liquor sales have increased to an enormous extent, now to reach the height of one of the two principle items in our Presidency, *i.e.*, almost amounting to 30 per cent. of the whole.

I should like to explain how an anxiety to provide for the needs of moderate drinkers has frustrated the "settled policy to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do." As admitted in the statement, the inevitable effect of giving facilities to moderate drinkers would be to offer temptations to those who do not drink and to induce moderate drinkers to commit excesses, and in order that these mischievous tendencies might be checked numerous devices have been suggested and one of them is to license shops and to raise the price of liquors. Now both these are highly productive in revenues and those subordinate officers who work the scheme may easily induce themselves to bring in more money to the state, and hence the provision for moderate drinkers goes on increasing and the Government as it supports the policy of providing for the needs of moderate drinkers may, with thanks, acknowledge the services of the obliging subordinate officers. Increasing revenue has induced encouraging budgets for liberal expenses and when once the state expenditure has risen fear of a deficit becomes an argument in further support of making full and necessary provision for all the moderate drinkers wherever they can possibly be found to reside. The process goes on in a vicious circle increasing the revenues in a progressive ratio with the avowed object of making necessary provision for moderate drinkers.

This criticism is made without any regard being had to the revenue as the accepted policy of the Government of India intended that "all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated". In my opinion therefore the excise policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, F. D., no. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 is defective inasmuch as this policy (*a*) definitely intends to make due provision for the needs of persons who use alcohols even in moderation and in this attempt at making such provision lies the germ of the mischief, and (*b*) has in practice actually offered strong temptations to persons who do not drink and gives facilities to moderate drinkers to commit excesses contrary to the objects intended by Government. This policy has not therefore been able to put an effective check on intemperance.

3. I would like to suggest an entire abandonment from the policy of any idea of making provision for any kind of drinkers and the present system should be so worked as to gradually wind up the state managed traffic in liquor, penalising the possession or sale of liquor beyond a particular quantity of specified quality, if need be. I think there are serious financial difficulties in the way of Government and hence a gradual reduction scheme should be followed with a clear conscience about the change in policy of making no provision for any kind of drunkards.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition of drink for the simple reason that it is impossible to achieve the object. For, as soon as the state penalises drink, the penalty must be enforced at all costs and then the remedy would be worse than the evil; and it could not be a practical measure. Besides it would be interfering too much with the liberty of personal tests.

I believe, however, and on this point the opinion is slowly concentrating, that if you allow people to manufacture liquor sufficient for the personal consumption of an individual for a day

or two, penalising only the possession or sale of it to others beyond a particular quantity, the labour and trouble in distillation will be too much to induce them to follow the practice, and time and attention to earn their bread will be demanded more and more. With the cost of living ever growing they could hardly afford to spend time daily after this process for luxury of drink. The evil will thus be greatly removed, though it could not be said at present whether it could be entirely eradicated. Those who belong to a richer class of population could not reasonably complain if they are made to pay extra for the more harmless luxury of wines.

5. Although I do not accept the policy of total prohibition the suggested policy will indeed operate as an indirect partial prohibition, for it would create certain circumstances which would put a great check on this luxury. Many of the objections mentioned in this question will not, however, be applicable to my suggestion, for there will not be prohibition for an individual's personal consumption sufficient for a day or two and objection (*a*) will not apply; (*b*) possession of liquor beyond a particular quantity if illicitly distilled is even now punishable. In the suggested scheme mere possession could be punishable and hence it would be easier to bring the offender to book.

(*c*) Customs and habits of the people would not be unncesssarily interfered with, for there is left to them the liberty of distilling it for their personal use.

(*d*) The heavy expense for preventing illicit distillation will be saved. The only deduction necessary being that of possession or sale, and it could well be entrusted to the village panchayats and their watchmen in the country and ordinary police in towns. Drunkards being more inconvenient to their neighbours more than to others, village panchayats with magisterial powers will be able to fully deal with it with the help of their watchmen.

(*e*) If people take to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs and if it be found injurious to society, they might be separately dealt with even by prohibition.

6. I do not believe in the argument that a policy of entire prohibition, although it may not be effective in this generation, be inaugurated, relying on its effectiveness in the coming generation.

7. I do consider that the end to be aimed at is the complete cessation of all liquor traffic to be managed and conducted by the State. I have stated in my answer to the second question that there must be legislative prohibition for the possession or sale of liquor beyond a certain quantity and of certain quality, if need be. There will be no need of any other legislation to achieve the end in view.

8. The policy that is suggested is with regard to all intoxicating drinks generally, making special concessions in quantity or quality. Toddy, some believe, is not intoxicant, if fresh.

9. For the gradual reduction of consumption in license shops with a view to the complete cessation of all liquor traffic by the State I would generally approve of the means suggested in question No. 10.

10. If the policy of Government is definitely altered, there will be an altogether different point of view in applying the various means suggested in this question.

Reduction of liquor shops will not then be only for the sake of reduction but with a view to increase inconvenience in obtaining liquor so gradually that the drinker would get disgusted with the habit of drink and not enraged at the reduction of the number. And the same will then be objective in the selection of the locality for such a shop in which special care will be taken to put up in a prominent place a chart showing in vernacular the disadvantages of drink and removing from the neighbourhood all shops of sweet-sellers.

On all holidays the shops should be closed and the hours for daily sales should be so regulated as not to make it very convenient to mill-hands and labourers to be induced to drop in public houses straightway from their workshops.

11. I am in favour of introduction of local option so long as the gradual reduction scheme is to be worked. It would have a double advantage of respecting the feelings of the public and sharing responsibility with them of the sale of liquor. The public opinion is very strong against liquor traffic.

So far as villages are concerned no shops should be allowed within the area of a village without consent of the village panchayat and unless demanded by a written application disclosing the names of the persons requiring it, which should be referred to such panchayat. In case of towns the consent should be obtained of the municipality on a written application of the persons residing in the locality in which a shop is demanded. In both the cases persons who would be against the opening of such a shop should be heard by the consenting bodies and if it is found that the majority of the people of the locality are against opening such a shop, the consent should invariably be withheld.

12. If the municipalities or local boards make a demand for such shop or shops in their respective areas, I think they should be considered to have undertaken the responsibility of helping the Government in their financial difficulties by raising a part of the revenue that would be sacrificed in the general scheme.

13. As I have got no experience of an Advisory Committee I could not form any estimate of its utility. If the liquor traffic has, however, incurred so much public odium, it may be inferred that there is room for improvement in the present constitution of the Advisory Committee.

14. If the loss of self-control be justly considered to contribute to an increase in crime, I cannot help thinking that the evil of drink would have that effect. If you want to make a man most indisciplined in life, the best remedy you would suggest to him is drink. It is because of this evil tendency of liquor that it is strictly prohibited to soldiers during war.

15. The net result of my recommendation will undoubtedly be absolute extinction of excise revenue. I fully appreciate the difficulties of Government when they are called upon to abandon full three to four crores of yearly revenues of the province. To make good this deficit would mean to raise the general taxation by 30 per cent. The position of Government is almost pathetic and even the severest critic of Government excise policy must sympathise with them. I have therefore recommended the scheme of a gradual reduction of the traffic with a determined policy of entire abolition so that during the interval other sources of revenue might be fully developed.

I know that land revenue could not be increased by a farthing. It must on the contrary decline with the growing influence of the agricultural community in the council and the spirit of organisation entering into their electorate. The economic condition of the peasantry is so wretched that that source of revenue should for ever be considered as more than exhausted. Much shall have to be reduced, if you should save the peasantry from a calamity.

Revenue from stamps could not be raised to any further extent, for you cannot render justice too dear. It is fast approaching a point where one can justly complain in the country that justice is practically denied to the poor.

Forest and irrigation are thus left to bear the burden of the deficit and, even if they would be fully developed, it would be too much to predict whether they could yield something like 2 to 2½ crores, *i.e.*, only a crore or a crore and a half to cover the deficit. I should therefore think it necessary that there should be an appreciable curtailment in the expenditure side by side with the development of forest and irrigation to meet the resulting deficits caused by the adoption of a policy of complete abolition of excise traffic.

16. No.

17. I know in almost all classes of Hindu population in the country there is a custom of giving opium to young children in extremely small quantity, it might be about one-tenth of a grain. I do not consider that it has an evil effect on the death rate among children in this part of Gujarat.

18. I should like to say a word on the other side of the question of drink. I have heard persons who sympathise with a moderate provision to be made for labourers who, they say, require some kind of stimulant after a day's work. I have invariably found these people candidly admitting that such stimulant could not be said in any way to strengthen the muscles or reform the worn out tissues, but the sitmulant, they admit, only intoxicates the brain physical and the nervous system so as not to make the drunkard feel exhausted. They have also admitted that the best remedy of exhaustion is good bath and rest and nutritious food. Government may sell alcohol and its preparations in a shop of their own for medical purposes and the complaint would I suppose be fully answered.

So far as the mill hands are concerned, I believe a legislative provision could be made by making it compulsory on all mills to make provision for play grounds, refreshment rooms and bathing arrangements for their hands.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. M. C. PATEL replied to the President:—"I have suggested to make good the deficit from forest and irrigation development because I am fully convinced on a close study of it that the land revenue could not possibly bear any the least burden of it, and I do not think that there is any further scope of enhancement in the stamp revenue. By a process of elimination then only those two sources are left to be tapped and as they too cannot fully meet the deficit I have recommended strict retrenchment. If the Minister after a careful inquiry into the matter were to assert that the forest and irrigation revenues are not capable of any great increase I am not in a position to contradict him and if the financial problem could not be solved, I am afraid you will have to continue the policy for some time which Government at present pursues.

"I am sure people are not prepared to accept any increase in the taxation in order that total prohibition may be made possible, and although cities can be made to contribute towards the deficit arising out of total prohibition the people would resent it, and I believe, with some justification, for they would say that the drunkards should pay for the increasing costs of educating their children rather than the more industrious and sober persons who are working hard for their livelihood. I am therefore of opinion that under no circumstances the fresh burden of the deficit be put on the people in general.

"I am in favour of local option. Public opinion is strongly against state traffic in liquor and I think Government ought to respect it as far as possible. Of course the question of finance is, as I have already stated, very serious and that is why Government should retrench the expenditure on administration. Public opinion has grown strong after Mr. Gandhi took up liquor propaganda mixing it up with his political agitation, although it is certain that even before that decent people did not like that drink should be even indirectly spread."

To Dr. Patil:—"I am against enforcing prohibition by law for the simple reason that it would be encroaching too much on individual liberty. I think it wrong on the part of any Government to dictate the personal tastes of people in food and drink. It is against the principle of a democratic Government. Total prohibition by Government would also be impractical. A person who is sober is, however, better than a drunkard and Government should do all it can indirectly to put a restraint on the growing habit of drink."

To the President:—"I would not myself undertake to fix the time limit for a complete reduction. I shoud like to leave it to in the hands of experts charged with the duty of carrying out a clearly defined policy of gradual reduction in drink."

## No. 94.

### Replies of Mr. RAOJIBHAI B. PATEL, M.R.A.C., of AHMEDABAD.

1. I am a retired officer of the Baroda State, where I served as Director of Agriculture and Industries, Revenue Officer and District Superintendent, Assistant Commissioner and Commissioner of Customs and Excise for a good many years. Since my retirement I have settled in Ahmedabad.

2. (*a*) I was Abkari Commissioner in Baroda when the Government of India enunciated their policy in September 1905. I considered it excellent under the then circumstances, and had it been carried out in spirit as well as in letter all these years, I still believe that the question of total prohibition would not have arisen, and such conditions would have been created that prohibition, if decided on, would have been easy of accomplishment.

(*b*) In practice, however, the real aims and the spirit of the policy have been set aside, and in actual results it has failed to reduce either consumption or intemperance. I have not been able to get together the necessary statistics in the short time allowed, but, if the Committee get statements from the Department, I believe they will find that the following inferences are fairly correct :—

(*1*) The increase in the tax on liquor has been so gradual and graduated, that the habitual drinker would not feel the rise, but would keep on using his full quota and paying more revenue.

(*2*) When shops have been closed, those that had very little sale have come to be selected and provision of facility for their customers to obtain liquor at shops near by without undergoing much fatigue, has been steadily kept in view.

(*3*) The percentage increase in tax, *i.e.*, duty and license fee combined, on country liquor has been higher than the percentage increase in the tax on foreign liquor, and the consumption of the cheap and deleterious brands of the latter has increased in consequence.

(*4*) The consumption of country liquor per head of the population has not decreased to any appreciable extent.

(*5*) There is less drunkenness but a larger percentage of the population is drinking. I believe that the decrease in drunkenness is due to social causes and the increase in moderate drinking to the execution of the policy laid down by the Government of India that it is necessary to make due provision for the needs of such persons as are in the habit of using alcohol in moderation.

3. If the drink habit is admitted as an evil, and in my opinion, it has been so admitted even by the drinkers themselves, there should be a fundamental change in the policy enunciated by the Government of India. Instead of regarding the interference with the habits of moderate drinkers as outside the duty of the Government, it should now be admitted as the clear duty of Government to reduce and ultimately eradicate the drink habit, and, in order to gain that end, not only all considerations of revenue, but also all considerations of the feeling and the so called rights of the moderate drinkers, should be absolutely subordinated. It is the catering for the moderates that increases their number and facilitates the creation of extremists from the weak minded moderates.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. My reasons among others already well ventilated by the public are :—

(*1*) Great monetary loss to the drinkers and the consequent loss to the country in their underfed families.

(*2*) The loss to the country in production through physical ill effects of drink.

(*3*) Check to the development of the spirit industry for commercial purposes and of sugar production from palm juice, necessitated by methods required for drink regulation and consequent revenue purposes. I do not think, however, that immediate prohibition is practicable under present circumstances. What is wanted is to keep total prohibition, say, in ten years' time, steadily in view, and to take such immediate steps as would create conditions favourable to total prohibition by that time.

5. *Objections considered.*—(*a*) Half the consumption of liquor in the Presidency is in the cities and towns and the bulk of the drinkers in these places are moderate drinkers and a few extremists of the higher and middle classes and the industrial population. Few of these have time or inclination to go in for illicit distillation. It is only in a few well known country districts that illicit distillation to any extent is resorted to. If a few men combine to produce illicit liquor for themselves it would not be so very great an evil, but what requires real checking is the facility for the sale of illicit liquor. Such facility exists now in all forest, sea side and such other backward tracts in the shape of the liquor shop keeper. His profits in the sale of licit liquor, specially since the advent of heavy auction fees for the license, are very small indeed and his interests lie in increasing sales. For him, to sell licit liquor just enough to avoid suspicion by the higher departmental authorities and make his profits from the sale of cheap illicit liquor

would be the best business, and it may be taken that he is a businessman out to make profits. The local departmental staff in these out of the way places also have great temptations to wink at the practice and I have heard of some cases of fixed amounts per still being charges by them as a regular levy, with occasional prosecutions to show the higher departmental officers that they are doing their duty. Prohibition would remove the shop keeper, and I think, on the whole, there would be a better check on illicit sales with a smaller staff under prohibition than under present arrangements.

(*b*) The Government has already entered into arrangements with the Indian States which are intermixed with British territory, by which their liquor arrangements have been either leased to the Government or have been assimilated. In the first case the difficulty is only one of money payments without return and in the latter, they may be induced to adopt the system adopted as preparatory to eventual prohibition. In the meanwhile a system of shopless belt within three miles of the boundary may be instituted. This system of shopless belt may be adopted with the other British districts also, till they come into line with us.

(*c*) Unless the custom is religious, no serious discontent need be apprehended. The Mahomedans and the generality of the Hindus are prohibited by their religion from drinking, and where some classes have the custom of offering drink and animal sacrifices to their goddesses, some alternative substances have always been provided in their rituals, in case the real articles are not obtainable or not desired. Moreover, any discontent of the male drinkers will have no chance of assuming an active shape as their women folk will be all on the side of the prohibitor.

(*d*) As mentioned under 5 (*a*) I do not anticipate the necessity of large preventive establishments everywhere. Except in some tracts where illicit distillation is even now rampant, the ordinary civil police will be quite able to check the little evil that may arise. At present, on account of the special staff everywhere and the natural departmental jealousy, the police do not care to interfere ; but when the special staff is disbanded, the police will do the work and, if a system of rewards to the police is adopted, there will be many more persons looking out for such offences than the staff engaged at present. Even in the illicit distillation tracts the employment of special parties of police will be more effective than a special Abkari staff. The Inspectors and higher Police officers are used to running into all tracts at a moment's notice, while the higher Abkari officers have to inform their local subordinates long before they wish to go, and so give them time, not only to make preparations for the difficult journey for their superiors but also to make everything shipshape. Moreover, the local police has a greater knowledge of the people and has much better sources of information than the Abkari staff and they are not imbued with the spirit of illegal exactions in dealing with an immoral trade. Where large portions of the population are addicted to drink and connive at illicit distillation, as is probable in parts of Surat, Thana, Kolaba and Khandesh districts, the cost of the special police parties may be charged to the local population and the general tax payer relieved of the extra burden.

(*e*) This is not only probable but quite possible in the case of the existing inveterate drinkers, but they will be few, and it would be better to risk their dying out a little earlier than to allow the continuation of a general evil.

6. I agree with the argument.

7. Prohibitive legislation should be accompanied by very active help to religious and temperance propaganda work.

8. I would prohibit the sale of all fermented liquors. A man may draw toddy from his tree and drink it if he will, but no one should be allowed to sell it. That would minimise consumption even of this non-deleterious drink.

9 and 10. As a preliminary to total prohibition some of the means suggested are very good.

(*a*) Rationing of shops at a fixed annual reduction will be a definite move towards eventual prohibition, but it should not be too gradual. It should be at least equal to ten per cent. of the present quota. I think however that in towns a rationing of drink of both country and foreign liquor would be the best means to reduce consumption. In war time and after, even food rationing had been resorted to in the most liberty loving countries for the general good. Rationing of drink will not therefore be considered a hardship. I would propose the appointment of Ward Committees or such other rationing authorities as may be considered best according to the local conditions in different towns, and no country or foreign liquor shop keeper allowed to sell liquor except on ration tickets. Such a system will immediately stop all clandestine drinkers and a very large portion of the better class population will give up drinking in very shame, while even those that are not afraid of social strictures will have no chances of going to excess. I expect a very large reduction in consumption in the very first year and the rationing of shops may then be based on that consumption as the maximum. I consider the rationing of drink as the acid test of Government desire to reduce consumption.

(*b*) Increase in the price of liquor would certainly check consumption if it is large and sudden, but the policy of gradual increase has so increased the cost by now that anything short of immediate doubling of the present cost will have very little effect, and this is not possible unless the Government of India agree to raise the tax on imported liquor. In my opinion the duty *plus* license fee on foreign liquor should always be double that on country liquor and, if this cannot be

achieved, I think any increase in the price of country liquor will be ineffective and will lay the Government open to the charge of looking out more for revenue than for temperance.

(*c*) Reduction in the number of shops is also very good in theory, but as already mentioned it has failed in practice. I shall discuss this matter further under 12.

(*d*) This is really effective to some extent.

(*e*) When a man begins to drink, he does it for pleasure or for aping, but the aim of the habitual drinker is the production of a certain amount of liveliness, if not of intoxication. A man's own brain is the best barometer for this and the fact that the reduction in strength of liquor has no where reduced the total quantity of alcohol as measured by proof gallons is proof of the failure of this policy. Inquiry will show that the people of certain parts have a taste for a certain strength of liquor. The aim being to reduce consumption, the strength of liquors should be so changed as to reduce the pleasure of the palate. I would suggest that a trial be made, at least in some forest area, of increasing the strength from 60 U. P. to say 35 U. P. and in decreasing the strength in towns from 25 U. P. to the same level ; it would be like giving strong tea to a man who likes it, and weak tea to one who has been accustomed to take it strong. In my opinion one uniform strength of say 35 to 40 U. P. everywhere will have a better result than haphazard reduction. This will also possess administrative advantages.

(*f*) *Vide 12.* Liquor shops should be located in most prominent places and there should be no backdoors or inner saloons.

(*g*) Until all the provincial Governments and the Government of India come to the opinion that India should go dry, prohibition of the importation of foreign liquor is impossible. It can however be restricted by charging prohibitive duties and this should not be less than double the combined duty and vend fee tax on country liquor in the city of Bombay.

(*h*) The age limit should be raised at least to 18 years.

(*i*) Helping temperance work, if done with a will, may be expected to do more than any other means. The so-called temperance associations, with their western ways of propaganda, will, I am afraid, have very little effect on the drinking classes. To keep whole masses away from drink the only effective workers will be religious preachers and caste guilds and they require special encouragement. Some years ago, in the backward parts of the Surat District, some of the Kaliparaj young men who had got the benefit of education started a crusade against drink with the help of bhagats (religious preachers) and the sales of liquor fell very low. The licensed shop-keepers, the big liquor supplier and the local Abkari staff, however, combined to fight the crusaders and won the battle. It is, therefore, necessary to issue instructions to all local revenue officers that to help such movements is the desire of Government and therefore a part of their duty, and that successful temperance work among whole classes of population in their districts would be noted in their favour and will count as special service for promotion. The Abkari staff may also be informed that any attempt at thwarting temperance work of the peaceful nature proposed will be seriously punished.

(*j*) Prohibition of the removal of liquor from country or foreign liquor shops, except in sealed bottles and that too not more than one bottle at a time unless it be under a special ration ticket, would help in reducing consumption.

11 and 12. I am in favour of introducing local option to be exercised by the public through municipalities and taluka local boards. In municipalities elected ward committees should have the right of objecting to the location of any shop in their wards by the municipality, the Collector and Commissioner in the case of the town and the city municipalities respectively and the Minister in the case of the City of Bombay being the final authority to decide in case of dispute between the ward committees and the municipalities. Village panchayats to have the power of objecting in the case of location of shops within the panchayat areas by the taluka local boards, the district local board being the final authority in case of dispute. As all considerations of revenue are to be subordinated to the cause of temperance, any indirect pressure on the local bodies, in the shape of liability for making good a part of the revenue lost by their efforts at temperance, would be against the policy. To say that those who want temperance should make good the loss of revenue is to admit that the policy of Government has been to get revenue at the expense of temperance and would be against the policy of the Government of India declared in 1905 which the Bombay Government is ostensibly supposed to be carrying out.

13. No. I would dispense with them altogether and have local option as suggested above.

14. Yes. In addition to such crimes as come to the notice of the police and the magistracy there is an amount of unreported crime in the form of thefts from home and relatives' houses, gambling and resort to prostitutes, more or less attributable to the drink habit. I am also of opinion that although an occasional drink after fatigue may have a good effect, drink as a habit does reduce the capacity for steady work and adversly effects the output.

15. As prohibition is expected to improve the physical well-being of the people and increase the general economic condition of the country, the logically sound tax to recoup the loss of revenue from drink is taxation of property. I know this form of taxation does not exist in a direct form in this country and there would be a hue and cry from very influential classes against it. But

the Provincial Government has no elastic sources of revenue, and is not likely to have any for a generation at least, as the Central Government is never likely to have any money to spare, it would be the best policy to take the plunge in the name of temperance reform which everybody wants.

16. In the case of opium and hemp drugs, the policy so far has been consistent and has reduced consumption. There are now very few persons left who are addicted to them. But, in order to stop fresh accretions to their number, I would propose rationing, not of the shops, but of the users throughout the Presidency.

17. The custom of giving opium pills to children seems to have originated in tired mothers wanting them to sleep and then spread by example and a false notion that it is good for the child's health. The high price of opium and spread of education has however greatly reduced the practice. Children's pills with aloes as the chief ingredient in place of opium are generally used now and, if the permission to opium shop-keepers to sell opium shavings and opium dust in the form of children's pills be withdrawn, it would help in eradicating the practice, especially if general rationing of opium is adopted as suggested in 16. In order that the shop-keeper may not lose, he may be permitted to exchange his opium shavings for opium in lump at the Government depots which supply him with opium, the maximum percentage of shavings on the opium issued being fixed.

In conclusion, I would add that the present system of getting liquor manufactured in central distilleries and issued at fixed prices may be continued, but instead of calling for tenders for the rate of supply the issue rate should be fixed by the Government and licenses given on a license fee basis and the manufacture of issue liquor within the Presidency should be insisted on. The licensee should be allowed to manufacture commercial alcohol from any excess production over that required for the diminishing consumption and allowed to get the same denatured under supervision in distillery warehouse. In order that the spirit industry may survive and prosper after prohibition, these licenses may be given for ten years or until prohibition, whichever comes earlier, to selected distillers even at the risk of favoritism.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. RAOJIBHAI PATEL replied to the President :—"The production of industrial alcohol at present is rendered difficult by various measures of control, and with a view to remove some of the difficulties I would advocate that the factories should be allowed to convert any excess left after supplying alcohol for purposes of drink, into industrial alcohol at their own premises. This will keep the industry going and production of industrial alcohol will go on even after prohibition is introduced. Thus the country would be saved a great loss.

"I have heard of the circular issued by the Baroda Minister prohibiting excise and revenue officials from taking part in temperance propaganda, but I believe that that circular would not have been issued if the Baroda State had the idea that the policy in British India was to subordinate revenue to temperance. I do not believe that it would be hopeless to get Indian States to fall in line with British India in the matter of the excise policy. I think it would be right for us to compensate the smaller States for any loss of revenue caused to them by the enforcement of prohibition.

"I do not think that if prohibition is introduced on the lines recommended by me, we will have a budget deficit either equal or nearly equal to all the excise revenue. The annual deficit would amount to about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total revenue of the Province for the ten years leading to prohibition and a finance minister worth his salt ought to be able to balance his budget from year to year without any great difficulty especially as there will be some reduction possible in the other establishments as crime gets reduced.

"Taking the area from Ahmedabad to Damaun and the Kaira District, illicit distillation has been reduced after the introduction of the Mhowra Act, and it is confined to the Macchis and Kolis on the sea coast and the Kaliparaj in the forest areas.

"In the riot year, Ahmedabad went dry during the 4 months when there is generally the highest consumption, and my impression is that there was not one case of illicit distillation. If there were 22 cases of illicit possession of liquor it was Government liquor from shops outside the city and I do not consider it at all abnormal. During the picketing movement, I am convinced the Abkari staff sometimes helped the people, who were ashamed to go to the shops openly, to get drink.

"The only method accepted by Government for temperance was that an increase of price would lead to people drinking less. Immediately they started the system, they found it brought in good revenue, and the policy of reduction in consumption was lost sight of. They started with the minimum vend system. Then there was the system of open competition, and when one man secured all the shops in a locality by paying very high fees, it appears that a rule has been made that the same man should not bid for more than one shop, and the revenue has fallen down in Ahmedabad from Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 3 lakhs. When restrictions like this are put, Government lose revenue and competition among different shop-keepers leads to adulteration on the part of the licensees.

" If the coupon system is introduced, even high officials like the Collector should get their liquor only by coupons.

" As regards taxation of property, different means of doing it will have to be found out for different places, according to local conditions. In New Zealand, they fix the unimproved value of land for 5 years. If you want it freehold, you pay the amount and take it; if under a lease with powers of purchase, you get 25 years' lease, with power to purchase at any time within that period, or you may have it under a perpetually renewable lease. It begins with the State holding all the land as in India. The private holder from the state either pays cash down for the price and gets it freehold or pays interest on the amount as assessment. Apart from this, all land is taxed on the unimproved value. In India also the land can be made freehold, and the Government can get twenty times the revenue as the price. Here the prices of lands have increased so much that unimproved lands which were worth Rs. 300 a bigha were recently sold for Rs. 15,000 a bigha.

" If you accept that by reduction of drinking you do increase the general prosperity of the country, the Government of India will get additional revenue, which is their unearned increment, and it can be assessed for the benefit of the provincial revenues."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Cheap foreign liquor is not wholesome, as it is artificial. Even what the Government now give is artificial liquor and it is not wholesome. Dilution of strong liquor with water to bring down the strength is like preparing *dal* in a concentrated form and adding hot water to it when serving it with other food. It is unwholesome to the taste and to the body also.

"By every distillation certain deleterious substances present in liquor are removed, and the more distilled the liquor the better it is both from the point of strength of alcohol and also from the point of view of the removal of these deletrious substances. These deleterious substances produce more craving for liquor than alcohol itself.

" In the case of toddy, I would allow free tapping but not sale. If taken fresh, it does no harm. If a man taps toddy and has a larger quantity than is necessary for him, he can make jaggery out of it. This is done on a large scale in Madras Presidency. If the pot used for holding the little drops of juice trickling from the tree were not cleaned and washed with lime, the bacteria will remain there and every drop that falls into the pot will ferment before the pot is filled. In that way fresh toddy too may get fermented. "

To Dr. Patil :—" I have no objection to prizes being given to police officials who detect illicit distillation. My proposal to change the strength of liquor given is to make it unpalatable to drinkers. If you give 40 U.P. to a man who is used to take 60 U.P. he will not like the taste : if you give 40 U.P. to a man who is used to 25 U.P. he will not like it. "

To the President :—" In the case of country liquor if you give 40 U.P. to a man who is accustomed to 60 U.P., there is no danger of its being adulterated by water because no country liquor drinker will himself adulterate the liquor, the common belief being that no water should be used with country liquor."

To Dr. Patil :—" But for the fact that there is control and heavy taxation of production of industrial alcohol, we would have been exporting it in large quantities to the West. "

No. 95.

REPLIES OF Dr. JACOB E. SOLOMON, L. M. & S., OF AHMEDABAD.

1. I am a medical practitioner of 11 years standing and before resigning my Government service as an Assistant Surgeon I had worked as a lecturer at the Hyderabad (Sind) and the Ahmedabad Medical Schools. I had also held temporary charge as Civil Surgeon, Superintendent of Jail and Health Officer of Basra City, and as Superintendent and Medical Officer of the Sind Convict Gang. I was also deputed on special duty to Lonavla to assist in looking after the health of the thousands of the labourers employed for the construction of Tata Hydro Electric Works there, and on special duty in the whole of the Haveli Taluka where I had to travel from village to village. I have also been working for two and a half years as Police Surgeon in Ahmedabad and thus had a special opportunity to observe the relation between drunkenness and crime. I am an L. M. & S. of the Bombay University.

I am connected with various activities of Ahmedabad, am Secretary of the Ahmedabad Sanitary Association and was a Municipal Councillor at Ahmedabad. My profession brings me in very close contact with the public, both rich and poor, drunkards, temperates and total abstainers. In the year 1920 and 1921 we had a special propaganda in the City of Ahmedabad and the suburbs with magic lanterns slides and illustrated charts in connection with the subject. Thus, I had special opportunities to study the question. We had correspondence on various points on the subject with Government on behalf of the Sanitary Association. We addressed a special letter giving *pros* and *cons* for the total prohibition of the sale of liquor as an intoxicant to all the members of the Bombay Legislative Council in 1921 to discuss the question so as to work out the goal.

I trust all this is sufficient to enable me to form an opinion on the subject with confidence.

2. (*a*) "The settled policy" of the Government of India, as they say, is :—

(1) "To minimise temptation to those who do not drink" and

(2) "To discourage excess among those who do."

This policy is based in their conception as to what the duties of Government are. They are twofold. Firstly, they think it outside their scope of duty as Government "to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol *in moderation* and, secondly, not only do they not stop with absolute non-interference, but on the contrary they deem it necessary—it is not clear whether because of their *duty* as a Government—to make "*due* provision for the needs of" moderate drinkers.

I find myself unable to see eye to eye with Government at the twofold bases on which they base their policy. Government condemn in no unmistakable terms excessive drinking. They would go the length of interference to prevent excess. Further, as they also tacitly admit that drinking, even though moderate, is an evil because the drink habit is an evil—and in my humble view it is nothing but an unmixed evil—the policy of the Government should be to *root* out the evil and not *merely to limit its potentialities for evil effects*. The present policy is to allow the habit to remain, nay, provide facilities for its continuation, and attempt to circumscribe it within certain limits. In the very nature of things such an attempt was *doomed* to fail and in my humble opinion time has proved its failure. "Minimising temptation" and "discouraging excess" are not only vague but relative terms and a goal or policy defined or described by these terms would not mean much. Again, the policy was enunciated so far back as 1905. India had always taken a view different from that of the West as to the necessity of intoxicating drink based upon religious injunctions and climatic conditions; but at the time of the enunciation of the policy by the Government of India the West had not come to believe that total abstinence was even, worthy of serious consideration. Times have changed since then and prohibition has so steadily gained ground that one would not wonder if a large area of the West goes dry within a few years. The policy of Government ought to be therefore changed. It must aim at *reducing to nil* the consumption of alcohol as well as of all other intoxicating drinks. It is absolutely essential for the moral and material well-being of the people generally and, in addition, particularly to prevent loss of working capacity, efficiency and health of the working classes living in large industrial centres. The policy being thus basically incorrect according to my humble view, the methods suggested fall far short of the requirements of the situation. But the methods are not equal even to the limited scope set out by the policy. There is an unnecessary nervousness about the possibilities of illicit production or substitution of more harmful drugs. This fear leads to a halting policy to reduce a number of shops and leaves it almost entirely to increased taxation to bring about the desired result. It is a fallacy to suppose that increased taxation would necessarily mean *decreased* consumption. Increased taxation would only mean increased revenue, which in turn mean greater difficulties, as years roll on, to boldly meet the loss of it. It also brings on the excise officer a mentality bewailed of by the Excise Committee of 1905-06, *viz.*, that enhanced revenue would be the criterion of efficiency and that they had no direct interest in the policy of restricting consumption.

(*b*) In my humble view, the results of this policy as it has been actually carried out are far from encouraging and it has not put any *check*—not to speak of any *effective* check—even on

intemperance. While the number of shops has been a little reduced the consumption is strictly on an increase. In his report on the administration of the Excise Department for 1920-21 (dated 10th August 1921), the Commissioner of Excise says : " There is very definite connection between the condition of labour and consumption of alcohol ". The rising consumption in such a poor district as Ratnagiri will show that contagion does spread in spite of higher prices. In fact, since 1908-09, while the consumption of country spiritous liquors has increased by about 13 per cent. (2,615,000 gallons as against 2,324,319), the consumption of toddy has gone up by about 100 per cent. (from 6,347,029 gallons to 12,563,000 gallons), not to speak of increases in the consumption of hemp drugs and imported liquors. These figures bear a very eloquent testimony as to how far the Government policy has succeeded—comment is unnecessary. The increase in consumption means, either more people have contracted the habit or persons habituated to drink have been drinking immoderately, or both. Whatever the interpretation, it indicates the failure of the Government policy.

3. Answer to question 2 (*a*) and (*b*) will show that I differ fundamentally from the very basis of the Government policy. I would suggest the ending of this policy and starting on settling total prohibition as the goal to be reached in a definite period, say, 5 years—in no case beyond 10 years. By the time, however, the process whereby the goal to be reached is settled, I would suggest that the Government policy should aim at a substantial reduction of consumption. This could be done broadly speaking by :—

(1) Reducing the number of shops.

(2) Supplying every shop only a fixed quantity and *no more* which fixed quantity should be less by 20 per cent. of the last year' s consumption and be determined with reference to the total consumption of the area and the number of shops.

(3) Curtailing the hours of sale.

(4) Closing the shops on Sundays and all public holidays, and also on pay days in industrial centres.

(5) Restricting the number of licenses for the sale of foreign liqour and imposing the maximum limit saleable by each licensee.

I believe, the above main changes should be immediately introduced by mere executive orders, without any legislation.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. My reasons briefly stated are as under :—

(1) Drinking is an unmixed evil undermining the health and morals of the people.

(2) Criminal tendencies are traceable to this habit.

(3) It damages man's working capacities, causes loss of efficiency, promotes ill-health and disease and encourages many other forms of vice.

(4) Prohibition is the natural policy for India. Her people are naturally abstemious and simple. The two great religions of the land contain emphatic injunctions against drinking and climatic conditions are also in favour of total abstinence. Considered and respectable public opinion is also against drink.

(5) Money spent over drinking is spent unproductively without any beneficial return either to the individual or to the society.

I consider it a practical measure. There is no *inherent* impracticability in it.

For carrying out prohibition, I would suggest the carrying out of the definite reduction in consumption of liquor by reducing the supply of liquor to retail vendors, say, about 20 per cent. per year—thus stopping all sales by the end of 5 years. At the end of this period legislation on the lines of the prohibition laws of America may be enacted. There must also be side by side some machinery to detect and punish breaches and violations of the Abkari laws, such as illicit production, sale, transport, possession, etc. Such gradual reduction will cause minimum disturbance in the Government finances and will also lead to minimum inconvenience to hard drinkers and thus minimise the possibilities of illicit traffic.

5. My general reply to the various objections is that they raise problematic questions as to certain possibilities and are presented in an exaggerated form more to scare away a prohibitionist than to advance any substantial ground against prohibition. Where there is a will there will always be found a way and, even if actual experience shows that some of the difficulties are real, still a Government determined on prohibition will not find it difficult to discover a solution. Moreover, absence of prohibition has been given a chance till now and, looking to the interest at stake, prohibition is worthy of being given a trial. Now to the objections *seriatim* :—

(*a*) The facilities referred to exist even now. It is not easily comprehensible why they should be availed of more when there is prohibition. It is perhaps meant that people at present do not take the trouble to use those facilities because they get liquor. But is this a fact? If it is so easy for one to avail himself of the facility without fear of detection as is suggested while arguing against prohibition, then people must be using those facilities even now as it saves them the high cost of Government duty. And if that cannot be done now

without the fear of detection, how can that be done when there is prohibition ? In any case, prohibition or no prohibition makes no change in the position.

(*b*) This difficulty is not really so formidable. In the first place, the proximity will affect only boundary tracts and not large tracts in the interior. Again, the policy adopted by one Government is bound to influence the other Government, whether of Indian States, Portuguese territory or British districts. It may also be remembered here that it is our Government that supplies liquor to a large number of Indian States. There is no fear in such cases at least of liquor being imported from those States. It means only the necessity of more effective watch on the border lines. Moreover, even at present, there must be going on some smuggling due to higher cost on account of duty. But assuming that there will be some illicit import or there will be some people on the border tracts who will continue to drink by going into adjoining territories, is it proper to expose a vast majority of the people to the temptations of drink ? Nobody thinks of doing away with all penal legislation simply because a few people may be able to commit crimes without being detected. It may here be noted that the States of Bhavnagar and Limdi have adopted total prohibition of Indian liquor.

(*c*) Religious customs will have to be respected as is done by the American Prohibition Act also. As regards the habit, it is the duty of Government to wean people from such habits as undermine the health, comfort and the material and moral well-being of the ryot. Drinking is a habit with what are called the lowest classes. Government may not be nervous about any discontent among them, as the intelligentsia will not only be with the Government on this question, but will help to allay the discontent, if any.

(*d*) This objection assumes that there will be illicit distillation everywhere. There is no warrant for any such assumption as that. As remarked by the Commissioner of Customs, increase of the drink habit is noticeable among the industrial classes. It is, therefore, such classes who are more likely to resort to illicit distillation. But the conditions of labour are such as hardly to leave them that time and energy as well as necessary seclusion for secretly carrying on illicit distillation from day to day. There need be no fear of illicit distillation on a large scale being carried on at some place for the use of the industrial classes in industrial centres. It will be impossible to carry on such a process for any length of time without detection.

There will be the necessity for maintaining a preventive establishment and it will certainly have to be paid sufficiently high to be above the temptations to levy illegal exactions. One may say that such temptations do exist even now and will always exist in all branches of public services. There is therefore not a novel difficulty peculiar to prohibition alone. Who knows even illicit distillation may not have been going on at the connivance of the establishment ? Again the present establishments have to do a double duty—

(1) preventive.

(2) controlling the shops.

They will be relieved of the latter and hence there will be hardly any necessity for strengthening the present staff.

(*e*) If people really take to other intoxicants, it will be comparatively a small number of confirmed drunkards. A large majority of the drunkards will be kept away from the temptation of liquor without falling into the meshes of any other intoxicants. Assuming that people do take to other intoxicants the prohibitionist will not be deterred by that but will extend prohibition to those intoxicants also.

Though prohibition is not in force, yet some of the drunkards have complained to me that country liquor of low quality, adulterated with some drugs to cause pungency and rapid intoxication, could be had from shops, probably because the shop-keepers having to bid very heavy amounts for the license of shops could not profit in their business without recourse to some such adulteration. We have so far not taken any specimens and got them chemically examined to verify the complaints, but it is not impossible that other intoxicants and deleterious drugs are being already administered to the drunkards through liquor.

6. Prohibition will be effective even in the present generation, but I do believe that it will be much more effective in the next generation than in the present. That is to say, the effects of prohibition will be more marked then than even now. Even assuming that prohibition may not save many a drunkard by weaning them from their drink habits, it will prevent the innocent younger generation from falling a prey to the drink evil.

7. Prohibitive legislation is the only means in my opinion. The only other alternative will be strong determination by the people to abstain from the drink evil, but this is not feasible. So long as the drink traffic is there, there will always remain a section interested in its promotion and they will always try all sorts of means to entrap the innocent. The weak will always succumb to the temptations. The force of public opinion, lectures, magic lanterns and other propaganda will be of supplementary value, next to prohibitive legislation, (*1*) to persuade the drunkards not to resort to any illicit methods if they have been doing this as slaves of a habit and (*2*) to facilitate the work of the preventive establishment by hearty co-operation of the people.

8. Yes. I would even try, if I could, to extend it to all intoxicating drugs with proper safeguards for allowing their use for medicinal purposes.

9. Answers to previous questions will show that in my view absolute prohibition is both feasible and desirable. I do not believe in controlling consumption from any standpoint other than that of realising maximum revenue from "the weakness of the people". If it is to be reduced gradually to *nil* then it means taking definite steps towards prohibition. I have already made some suggestions in answer to question 3 and others are considered in question 10 below.

10. On expressing my opinion on the suggestions made in this question as well as in making other suggestions I may not be understood to give up total prohibition as the first best remedy. The means suggested in question 10 are half-hearted measures which will not do any good as the first best remedy. With these remarks I may proceed :—

(*a*) Shops should be rationed but rationing should be reduced every year by a definite percentage as suggested by me in reply to questions 2 and 3.

(*b*) I do not favour increase of price. So long as you are not prohibiting drink, any increase in price would mean incentive to illicit production, distribution as well as adulteration. It would also mean that fall in Government revenue would not be proportionate to the reduction in consumption and there will always thus continue to be present the difficulty of adjusting finances, if reduction is to be carried out beyond a certain minimum or to *nil*. It would also lead the Excise officer to view the question more from the financial point of view and other intentions will merely remain as pious ones expressed on paper.

(*c*) This should be immediately done. There should be a limit on the number of shops in any area. The limit may be fixed on the population basis, say, one shop for a population of one lakh of souls. It should also be provided that no two liquor shops should be within the radius of one mile. (At present shops are situated very near each other, sometimes only five minutes' walk.)

(*d*) Liquor shops should not be opened before 8-30 a.m. and must be closed at sunset. During the day they should be closed from 11-30 to 1-30. This should particularly be the case in towns and industrial centres. Shops should be closed on Sundays (or on some such day in the week which is generally observed as a holiday in a particular part of the district) and also on public holidays. In industrial centres they should be closed on days when labourers are paid their salaries. Large employers of labour can be requested to fix certain days for wages. In Sholapur, I am informed shops are closed on days when the mills make the fortnightly payment of wages. Such a practice could be easily introduced in Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Broach, Surat, Nadiad, Bombay and other industrial centres.

(*e*) This should also be done. I believe, the lower strength will prevent fresh recruits from being slaves to the habit and the confirmed ones may have opportunity of gradually giving it up. The strength should be 60 U. P. ; 30 U. P. and 40 U. P. should be absolutely prohibited.

(*f*) There should not be a shop in a locality where a majority of the people do not desire to have any. An Abkari Committee (instead of the present Advisory Committee) for deciding the location of shops should be formed by election from among the elected members of the municipalities and local boards for the area and their decision should be made binding on the Excise authorities in the various methods suggested as means in question 10 except (*b*) and (*j*). The Committee should also have the power to enquire into illicit sales and breaches of conditions of the licenses granted.

(*g*) Direct prohibition or restriction of importation of foreign liquor may perhaps raise questions of Imperial policy, but this can be done indirectly by restricting the grant of licenses and rationing the maximum that could be sold as a condition of the license. Such restrictions should be on the lines suggested by (*a*) and (*c*) above. All the restrictions which would apply to indigenous liquor shops should equally apply to foreign liquor.

(*h*) This should be done particularly with regard to foreign liquor. Otherwise, whatsoever is gained by reduced consumption of country liquor would be lost by increased consumption of foreign liquor.

(*i*) The age limit should be 18 instead of 14 as at present. The age of majority under the general law is 18. In case of liquor that limit at least should be kept, if not a higher age limit.

(*j*) I do not believe in temperance. There should be total abstinence. In any case, whatever money Government can afford, should be used in reducing the consumption of liquor rather than subsidising temperance associations. When it is entirely in the hands of Government to stop a mischief by prohibition, it seems inconsistent on the one hand to keep temptations and on the other hand to attempt to encourage people to keep away from them. The easier and more direct way would be to remove the temptations altogether.

(*k*) Removal of liquor from shops should be absolutely prohibited and the quantity served on the premises should be also restricted to a maximum of 5 ounces to one person

any one day. Such restriction should be made a condition in the license which should be liable to forfeiture on breach of this condition.

During the five years of the transitional period Government should sell liquor in Government shops at the price fixed by them with due regard to the hints given above. The management should be entirely state management without the licensing. The time of total prohibition must be fixed beforehand to take effect, say, after five or ten years, and the control of consumption during that period should be so arranged as to have no difficulty to introduce total prohibition at the stated time. This arrangement will yield Government an extra income which would have gone to the pockets of the licensed shop-keepers and will be proof against bad quality of liquor or breach of the license conditions, thus preparing the people and adjusting the Government finances to enforce total prohibition at the fixed time.

11. Yes. There must be some method of knowing and enforcing the wishes of the people of the different localities in respect of liquor shops. Votes may be recorded along with the municipal and local board elections or the same voters' list should be utilised for ascertaining the wishes of the population. If committees, such as those suggested in reply to question 10, are formed, they will be fairly representative and occasions to refer to votes directly will be very rare.

12. Yes. Local bodies should be invested with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. I am not in favour of making them directly responsible for the loss of revenue to Government. The reasons are :—

(1) There is no guarantee to a local body that either Government or the neighbouring local body will not locate or reduce or remove the shops already located just outside the local limits of its area. In such circumstances, while the local body cannot carry out its object of reducing the drink evil, it will have something to pay as loss, though loss may ultimately have been very little or *nil*, being compensated for on account of shops just outside its area. I urge this standpoint because the areas under local bodies would be very small, not leaving practical distinctions between boundary lines and interior tracts,

(2) Ascertainment of the loss will be a very complicated matter almost incapable of just ascertainment, and

(3) Further, it would be wrong to consider the question from that standpoint. Other general means should be found for curtailing the expenses or adding to the income ; but no civilized Government should have to exist on income derived from the moral degradation of a section of the people or of the people living in any particular area. Therefore, any particular section or area should not be burdened with the payment of the amount that is equivalent to or part of that obtained from the moral degradation of that section or area.

13. In my opinion, the institution of the Advisory Committee has not been useful. I have already suggested in answers to previous questions wholly elected committees which would not be merely advisory but controlling committees. But here again I may remark that questions 11, 12 and 13 proceed on the assumption that control of consumption would meet the situation. Controlling consumption and all the measures suggested in answers to those questions with that end in view cannot solve the real problem. Nothing short of a bold policy of *prohibition at any cost* will meet the situation. The earlier it is done the lesser the difficulties.

14. The evil of drink does undoubtedly contribute to increase in crime. That it does so directly can be seen from the larger number of petty cases of hurt, affray etc., occurring at the time of Holi and other big festivals and 'melas' when the working classes and the lower classes resort to drink. It is noteworthy that liquor shops are closed in the City of Bombay during Mohorram and Holi holidays. The evil also indirectly promotes crime by inducing many other forms of vices. Prohibition will save a good deal of the expense incurred on the maintenance of the police, magistracy and jails by enabling the Government to reduce the strength of those services. Drinking has also an effect on the output of work. The decay of general health and mental derangement limit the capacity for higher proficiency in skilled labour and also affects the efficiency of the worker. It is the usual experience that the usually sober man puts in more and better work than a habitual drinker, though a labourer under the effect of alcohol may put in extra physical work or undergo an extra physical strain for a short time, but the reaction following subsequently is sure to sap his vitality and lessen his resisting power.

15. The net result of my recommendations is absolute extinction of the Excise revenue within a period of five years by reducing consumption to the extent of 20 per cent. every year. This would mean that Government will get five years' time to adjust the finances.

Taking the average revenue at 3,50,00,000 we have to provide for a loss of :—

70,00,000 for the first year.

1,40,00,000 for the second year.

2,10,00,000 for the third year.

2,80,00,000 for the fourth year.

3,50,00,000 for the fifth and subsequent years.

The question of finances cannot be adequately dealt with in all the details in a little note like this by way of answer; and I believe that is not what is expected also. I would, therefore, attempt broad suggestions only.

The question assumes that the loss could be made up by additional income only. I would suggest that it should be met in the first instance by an all-round retrenchment in expenditure and additional sources of income may be looked for and tapped only when we are thoroughly satisfied that further economy is possible and that the retrenchment effected falls short of the loss to be made up. First then, as regards the outlines of retrenchment.

## I. Line of proposed retrenchment.

### *A.—Reduction of the number of high salaried posts.*

In my humble view the administration is at present top-heavy. It will be necessary to substantially reduce the number of very highly paid posts. The difference in the salaries of the highest posts and the posts next to them is in many cases disproportionately high. To illustrate my meaning just by an example—while the Secretary, Revenue Department, is paid a salary of Rs. 3,125 per month, his immediate subordinate the Deputy Secretary gets Rs. 1,950 *plus* Rs. 200 while his immediate subordinate the Assistant Secretary gets Rs. 700 per month. Each one of these, I presume, is deemed qualified to hold the superior appointment in the case of vacancies for a short duration. Such higher posts could I believe be reduced without affecting efficiency. Another example may be given from the budget for educational expenditure. Out of the total expenditure of Rs. 5,76,000 for the maintenance of the Government Arts Colleges a sum of Rs. 1,03,150, *i.e.*, a little less than 20 per cent., goes towards the pay of five persons as Principals and Vice-Principals, while 1,89,400 goes for the pay of 19 persons as professors. In these cases there is no question of high technical knowledge. Not being conversant with the detailed list of the establishments and the actual working of the various departments, I cannot suggest a complete list of the reductions. But the following may be illustrative :—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| Superior officers of the Forest Department | 3,34,000 |
| Selection grades of Deputy Collectors | 26,400 |
| | 3,60,400 |

### *B.—Reduction of intermediary or supervising officers.*

In the grades and subordination of officers, I believe a good number could be either entirely dispensed with or substantially reduced without affecting efficiency in the least. I may also say that in my view efficiency of administration depends more on the quality and conditions of pay of the lower subordinate officers than upon providing double, triple or quadruple supervision. An example may make my meaning clear. The actual work of the collection of land revenue is carried on by village talatis. By way of supervision over this work we have

(1) the Circle Inspector,
(2) the Mamlatdars,
(3) the Sub-Divisional or Prant Officer, or the Assistant Collector,
(4) the Collector,
(5) the Revenue Commissioner.

So many supervising and intermediate agencies are unnecessary. Viewed in this light, I would suggest retrenchment as follows :—

| Offices proposed to be abolished. | Amount saved as from Budget Estimates 1922-23. |
|---|---|
| | Rs. |
| Divisional Commissioners .. .. .. | 3,34,000 |
| Either Assistant Collectors or Deputy Collectors .. | 6,00,000 |
| Deputy Registrar, High Court, Original Side .. .. | 17,280 |
| Deputy Registrar, High Court, Appellate Side .. .. | 10,800 |
| Registrars to District Judges .. .. .. | 16,200 |
| Sergeants of city police .. .. .. | 81,600 |
| Deputy Inspector Generals of Police .. .. | 78,440 |
| Assistant Superintendents of Police .. .. .. | 1,37,750 |
| Assistant Director of Education .. .. .. | 21,150 |
| Divisional Inspectors of Education .. .. .. | 98,850 |
| Deputy Sanitary Commissioners .. .. .. | 33,000 |
| Deputy Directors of Agriculture .. .. .. | 56,000 |
| Deputy Directors of Industry .. .. .. | 23,800 |
| Director of Information .. .. .. | 60,000 |
| | 15,68,870 |

*C.—Reduction of salaries and allowances.*

In my humble view, the higher services are being over-liberally paid. In no country of the world can a parallel be found. I won't grudge paying for services absolutely necessary in the interest of the country. But such services would be only of experts. I believe, for the civil administration it is not necessary to import foreign agency at such a high cost and allowances. I know the question of their salaries is a non-votable item under the Government of India Act, but if salaries could not be reduced so as to make the burden bearable by India, the only other course is to reduce the number of posts the salaries whereof are non-votable. I do not know whether such a reduction also is non-votable, but if India is really to have responsible self-government she must have freedom to adjust her internal affairs to the needs of her finances. The salaries with their allowances need therefore be revised by such legislature as may have the power to do so.

The votable salaries could be reduced by the Council. The high cost of living was the main ground of the revision of salaries, but the persons hardest hit are those who were getting merely living wages, *i.e.*, the lower subordinate services. The higher services have no doubt been affected by the higher cost of living but that is limited only to the extent of their savings and luxuries. One notices the higher standard of general living due to higher salaries of higher posts. While I would wish them to enjoy their higher standard and also to be as little affected as possible in their savings and luxuries, I believe the condition of our finances is such and sure to be such as days pass on as to justify reduction in the best interests of the masses. I would, therefore, propose a general reduction of 20 per cent. in the revisions made in respect of posts carrying salaries of Rs. 500 per mensem and above.

*D.—Miscellaneous retrenchment.*

There would be many items of small expenditure which could be dispensed with. I may point out that substantial saving could be effected by discontinuing the migration to Mahabaleshwar. The hill journey and the travelling allowances alone come to Rs. 70,000.

*E.—Special savings.*

By the extinction of Excise revenue Government will be automatically relieved from the following payments :—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| Contribution to local boards in view of the one anna cess on Excise revenue.. | 1,55,000 |
| Contribution to the Bombay Municipality .. .. | 1,43,750 |

*F.—Discontinuance of certain grants, i.e., indirect taxation.*

I would suggest the discontinuance of the following grants :—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| Grants-in-aid to the municipalities for employment of Health Officers and Sanitary Inspectors. The amount of grant to each municipality is so small that it would not materially affect it if it is discontinued. | 1,15,000 |
| Special grant for the education of European and Eurasian children. I would strongly disapprove of special grants based on racial distinctions. Education could be one for all communities and if any particular community desires to have a special type of education that community should provide the necessary funds. | 2,09,000 |
| | 3,24,000 |

The above proposals for retrenchment will effect a saving of approximately two crores. It will be noted that the retrenchment proposals do not touch the Excise establishment, which it will not be necessary to further strengthen on prohibition. As stated above in reply to one of the questions, the staff will have to do only preventive duty, being relieved of the duty in connection with the liquor shops.

The above proposals are obviously rough and also vague but they are intended more to indicate the lines than as cut-and-dry proposals. The Retrenchment Committee will, it is hoped, carry out retrenchment to the above extent after considering all the details in regard to every post, every establishment and every item of expenditure.

II. DIRECT TAXATION.

If, even after retrenchment, it is found necessary that there should be fresh taxes to meet any deficit, I believe ways and means can be found out. At present, the three and half crores of Excise revenue to Government mean a dead loss of at least five times as much to the public and I do not think the public, which will be saving by means of prohibition all this loss, will

grudge to part with a small fraction of it to save the whole. A tax on entertainments like the one recently proposed or *a tax on factory wage earners in industrial centres*, or any other method may then be thought out. Attempts to look at new sources without first carrying out all the possible retrenchments in my opinion render any attempt at retrenchment quite futile.

16. I would recommend prohibition of opium and hemp drugs, except for medicinal purposes. There should be no difficulty in obtaining them when prescribed or certified by any qualified medical man as in the case of alcohol.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent to a large extent. I have noticed many cases among the working classes and other classes. Opium is not taken in crude form but given in the form of what is popularly known as " bal-goli " (infant-pill) in Gujarati. This custom is, I believe, largely responsible for the high death rate among children.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Dr. SOLOMON in reply to the President :—" I would not mind if a tax is put on the extra profits the millowners are likely to derive if prohibition is introduced, but I have not considered the manner in which that tax is to be levied. I may also point out that the tax that is proposed on mill hands will act as an indirect tax on the millowners, as they will have to pay increased wages. (The President told the witness that it might be argued as the tax will only form part of the saving which the mill hands will make when prohibition is introduced, it was not likely to fall on the millowners.) Another proposal for retrenchment which I would make is amalgamation of districts.

" Our Sanitary Association has been working since 1916. I have not had any personal experience of working of liquor shops, but I have made enquiries from those who drink and I have also visited the shops. I have come to know that there are always breaches of the excise regulations and that there is a lot of encouragement given to drinkers by the licensees. I have also heard that the quality of liquor that is given as the first peg is always good, but that when the consumers go on drinking peg after peg, the quality is adulterated with acid and datura. I have seen during the course of my practice some people who are drunkards having dilation of the pupils, which is the result of taking datura frequently.

" I advocate that Government should make a declaration that at the end of five or ten years there will be prohibition.

" I want that liquor should be made available for medical purposes. I would also agree that all those who now drink should be permitted to drink under a system of certificates. Even in their case the quantity allowed should be gradually decreased. I would be in favour of allowing drink to Europeans and Europeanised Indians, with a view to remove the danger of their coming in the way of India going dry. The belief at present is that Government have the interests of Europeans at heart when they say that they do not wish to prohibit those who want to drink.

" Our Association has been carrying on temperance propaganda. If the propaganda is not kept up those who make promises not to drink relapse to their drink after a few days as the presence of shops in the neighbourhood counteracts our work of propaganda.

" I would also recommend that side by side with liquor shops, there should also be established shops where wholesome drink can be had, so that those who go to the liquor shops may be encouraged to take these wholesome drinks.

" I have got certain figures from the Superintendent of Salt and Abkari, Ahmedabad. Between 1911 and 1921 the population has increased by 17 per cent., but consumption of country liquor has increased by 56 per cent., and consumption of foreign liquor (potable spirit including Indian manufacture) has increased by 152 per cent. (taking two years' average at the beginning and at the end of 10 years).

" We have also heard that as the licensees have to pay high duties, in order to save themselves from loss they adulterate liquor and sell by short measure."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I would allow the on-sale system for the majority of drinkers, and the off system for Europeans and Europeanised Indians."

To Dr. Patil :—" In ' The Health of Industrial Worker ' by Collins and Greenwood there is an extract stating that after experiments it has been found that alcohol is never required for the health of the worker and that it usually impairs his health. There is also another paragraph stating that statistics collected by the largest insurance companies in America and England show that the average mortality amongst total abstainers from alcohol is 68·4 per cent. of the accepted rate, whereas the average mortality among drinkers is 91·5 per cent.

" I have seen drunkenness among toddy drinkers. It is not due to alcohol only, but also other fermentations taking place in the toddy. It may also be due to adulteration. There is an idea even among educated people that if toddy is drawn fresh and drunk with one foot on the particular tree from which it is drawn, it will have a good effect. But fresh unadulterated toddy can never be got in shops. "

No. 96.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

* Mr. G. V. MAVALANKAR, B.A., LL.B., Pleader, Ahmedabad, replied to the President:—"I am a graduate of the Bombay University and am practising as a pleader since 1913. I have also been a Municipal Councillor of Ahmedabad for two years and a half. I have personal knowledge about the picketing of liquor shops in Ahmedabad. The picketing was carried on from March to November 1921. I was in charge of the general supervision of the operations as Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee. I used to attend shops personally for picketing and to go round the shops in the early stages, but later I had no time to regularly picket in person or to go round as often as I used to do in the early stages. During that period there were several breaches of the Abkari law committed by the licensees. I must however make one point clear, *viz.*, that I should not be taken to have personal knowledge of every breach that occurred. We had a system of receiving daily reports from each of the shops. There were eight shops that we had to picket. Each shop was in charge of a responsible man who had to submit his daily reports. Off and on I used to go round to see whether the volunteers were working properly. I used to digest all these reports and publish, in the local papers, weekly reports. In those weekly reports I did not generally publish any general allegations which the volunteers made. I had instructed them to put in as test cases specific instances giving the names of people and the names of witnesses to testify to what was happening. I published only such specific cases from the reports about which, from the reports and from further enquiries I made, I felt convinced that there was a breach. We never complained to the district officers or to the police. Generally there was sale of liquor at so many places outside the shops. The licensees used to send round men with their bottles to the drinkers, and in those days you could have drink in Ahmedabad in many places over and above the eight licensed shops. I can quote specific instances stating that drink was sold at such and such a place. Then shops were opened before time and closed after time, the shop keepers' clocks going fast in the morning and going late at night. There were also other kinds of breaches of the Abkari law and regulations.

"During the whole picketing period, at each shop there were two plain clothes men of the C. I. D. and two policemen in uniform, to see that there was no breach of peace or violence.

"I believe that the authorities knew of these illegal practices. In fact, the editor of the 'Praja Bandhu' wrote a letter to Mr. Hartshorne, inviting his attention to my reports, but he replied that he was not in the habit of reading the 'Praja Bandhu'. But when it was persistently brought to his notice, he replied that the Abkari staff was too busy with the preservation of peace and order, due to the picketing movement, and had no time to mind the things which were complained of; and if the object was not to cause loss of Government revenue but genuine temperance, he might consider the matter. It is very difficult to pry into the mentality of the officers in conniving at those breaches. I believe it was solely due to considerations of revenue. The authorities might have also felt that as the licensees were the sufferers—they had put in their money under the belief that their trade would go on as usual—it was probably due to them (the licensees) that they should not be put to very heavy losses.

"The picketing movement did not go on for all the nine months with the same vigour; there were some lulls on and off, but after nine months we suspended the movement. It is not possible to tabulate my information as to the number of boys who were supplied with drink. My instructions were not merely to rest with saying that so many boys drank, but pick up by way of illustration a few cases in which a prosecution could definitely be supplied in a court of law. There were some cases reported of that nature, but being illustrative and not exhaustive tabulation will not be helpful. My report generally stated that liquor was being supplied to boys.

"I do not think picketing is a permanent remedy for the abolition of drink. I would go in for wholesale prohibition, but if that is not possible at once, I would prefer local option.

"The details as regards the number of men, etc., to work on the committees might be worked out later, but there need be no ground to say that people are not ready for local option, and they should not be given the right. Assuming that people are not ready, they are to be trained. I believe that men of requisite qualifications can be found to work the scheme.

"As regards the financial side of the question, and the means to make up the deficit caused by the loss of excise revenue, I can only make a general statement. For any reduction of particular posts, the requirements of the particular department will have to be looked into, and it would mean an independent enquiry by itself. We have not had the time or the materials to go into all that. My statements will therefore be only suggestive or indicative. I suggest that there are so many double posts. For instance, in the administration of the Revenue Department, the actual work of revenue collection is practically done by the talatis, and substantially by way of supervision you have over him a circle inspector, a mamlatdar, a deputy collector or Assistant Collector, a Collector, a Commissioner, and finally the Government. The Commissioners' posts might be abolished, or, at any rate, they could be relieved of a good deal of work in the matter of revenue, and with the staff in the Secretariat, I believe

* This witness did not submit a written statement.

the work of co-ordinating the various district administrations will not be so very difficult if each Collector in his district is put directly under the Secretariat. However, I do not claim to have considered the matter in all its aspects. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" One other officer that, in my opinion, you can do away with is th Deputy or Assistant Collector. I do not see why these posts should be maintained for training up the Collectors. At present Collectors are not all recruited from Deputy Collectors (provincial) but, if need be, the Mamlatdars may be promoted to the posts of Collectors. If from a collectorship of one district you can have a Commissioner of six districts, where is the harm in promoting a man from the government of one taluka to the government of seven? I must however confess that I have not given detailed thought to it."

To the President :—" As regards any proposals for fresh taxation, Government should first go in for retrenchment in every direction possible and if all attempts in that direction fail, then and then only we may think of further taxing the people.

" As regards a tax on wage earners, I would suggest some form wherein the employer would be the collecting agency. The amount may be as much as Government considers necessary to realise from the employees. It may be so much percentage of the income. I believe there should be a minimum limit ; I cannot say what it should be."

To Mr. Madon :—" I do not mean particularly the factory labourers. I only point it out as an avenue if Government want it, because of the definite connection which drink has with industrial conditions. I am afraid it will be difficult to have it for all labourers, as the cost of collecting it may be so great as to defeat the object itself. If it could be collected through the employers, then only it should be. If it is only for industrial towns, perhaps it would be more feasible to tax any commodity which the labourers in particular make use of.

" If as a result of prohibition, the employers make more money by the increased efficiency of the labourers, I do not think there would be any injustice in taxing the employers also.

" The municipalities might collect the taxes on commodities.

" I am afraid the labourers will not welcome such a direct tax, and they might make a grievance of it, but if proper propaganda is carried on among them, I have no doubt that they would appreciate the fact that they are saving a great deal by the stoppage of all drink and are being asked to contribute a little of their savings as a substitute for the excise revenue. I cannot say whether there is any definite opinion among them about it."

## No. 97.

### Replies of the Exise Advisory Committee, Nadiad.*

1. We are members of the Excise Advisory Committee recently constituted by Government. As we are moving about in the taluka we have opportunities to study the habits and conditions of the people who are in the habit of taking liquor.

2. We favour the policy, but it has not been able to put an effective check on intemperance.

3. No change in the selected policy is suggested.

4. We are not in favour of total prohibition.

5. As we are not in favour of total or partial prohibition, it is not necessary for us to answer this question.

6. The argument that prohibition will not be effective in the present generation but will have a large influence on the next is sound. Nothing could be said against the argument.

7. Social pressure can have a large effect, but it would require to be supplemented by legislation. Where social pressure fails the caste *panches* should be at liberty to invoke the aid of law.

8. Yes, if prohibition is to be made effective. We do not recommend prohibition of the use of toddy or shindi.

9. The same means which are suggested in question No. 10.

10 (*c*) Where the population is less than 5,000 there should be no shop. Where the population exceeds 5,000 but does not exceed 20,000 only one shop. Where the population exceeds 20,000, one additional shop should be given for every 20,000 or part thereof.

10 (*i*) Start from 16 and raise gradually up to 20.

11. We are not in favour of local option at present.

12. We are in favour of investing local bodies with powers, but they should be made responsible for 50 per cent. of the loss of net revenue to Government which may arise out of the closure and removal of shops.

13. We cannot give any opinion on this point without further experience.

14. Yes. It has some effect if taken in moderation on the output of work, but its after-effect is bad ; in cases of excessive drink the effect is worse on the output of work.

15. All articles of luxury, such as tea, biddis including visits to theatres and cinemas, etc., should be taxed.

16. None, except reasonably raising the prices gradually.

17. Middle and lower class illiterate persons give opium to young children in order to keep them quiet. It has no appreciable effect on death-rate.

---

* Messrs. Trikamlal S. Parikh of Nadiad and Muljibhai Chaturbhai Amin of Mahuda, who were invited to attend for oral evidence on behalf of the Nadiad Excise Advisory Committee, did not attend.

No. 98.

*Replies of Mr. SEVAKRAM RATANLAL DESAI, B.A., LL.B., Vakil, High Court, Nadiad.

1. I am a pleader by profession. I passed my LL.B. examination in 1911 (November) and commenced my practice from March 1912. I have confined myself entirely to the criminal side and as such have had some opportunities of forming an opinion on the questions referred to by the Excise Committee. Besides my experience as a pleader, I had some experience on the matter as a Revenue officer and Second Class Magistrate, as prior to my passing the LL.B. examination I had served in the Revenue Department in the Kaira District from March 1900 to February 1912.

2. (*a*) The Excise policy as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, is indeed wholesome and evidences pious intentions on the part of Government. The method, laid down in the said Resolution, of furthering this policy seems to be defective, for it has given an opportunity to the executive officers entrusted with the carrying out of this policy to turn the liquor traffic into a profiteering concern for Government at the risk of the public good. It is a matter of surprise why that should have been so, in spite of the Government of India's desire to subordinate all considerations of revenue to the furtherance of the policy so explicitly laid down in the Government letter under reference. It appears that the intentions and orders of Government are more honoured in their breach than in observance and it raises a doubt whether there should not have been a confidential circular or order issued side by side with the Resolution under reference, advising the executive to be careful enough to see that the revenue from liquor traffic did not suffer in any way by faithful adherence to the orders contained in the said Resolution under reference. If that be so, the Excise policy as laid down in the Government of India's Resolution is a clever gloss over the actual departmental working. If that be not so, *i. e.*, if there is no confidential letter issued as stated above, the executive officers are responsible for the studied evasion of the injunctions of the Government of India.

(*b*) Presumably, as a result of the policy, the Excise Department was reorganised in about 1906. High posts ranging from Rs. 60 to 300 per mensem of Sub-Inspectors and Inspectors were created and filled by special selection from Europeans, Eurasians, Parsees, Mahomedans and Hindus. Posts of Assistant Collectors were created. The Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors were given a party of peons. Strict orders were issued to these Sub-Inspectors and Inspectors to see that illicit distillation was detected and liquor sales increased. The working of the Excise Department was thus carried on in full swing. Informers were invited and rewards were paid to them. Many cases were detected and sent up for trial. The number of these cases increased by far over the number prior to 1905. In my experience, I saw that most of the cases I had to deal with were false and manufactured. Informers are generally men who have a private grudge to gratify or men actuated by greed of money or service as Excise peons. The increase of sale of liquor was erroneously believed to be due to extinction of illicit distillation. Somehow or other liquor drinking tendency increased and the vice of intemperance made its way into those classes where liquor was religiously prohibited. Instead of bringing about temperance, horrible intemperance has resulted, crime has increased in proportion to the increase of drunkenness, liquor shop-keepers have thrived beyond proportion and the pockets of the Excise staff filled with illegal remunerations. Surely, the Thana District scandal is known to all. The result has, so far as I can see, been favourable to Government in point of revenue. Increase of intemperance has brought in its train looseness of morals, crime, premature deaths, poverty and ruin. And when now there is a reaction brought about by the angelic preachings of Mahatma Gandhi and the public of India has, with its eyes wide open, begun to loath the drinking habits, we see with regret Government officials making strenuous efforts to safeguard their revenue derived from the liquor traffic so organized, monopolized and commercialized by them with jealous eyes. Reference is solicited to Mr. W. E. Johnson's (Pussyfoot's) instructive article "Gandhi—India's Man of Hour", published at page 9 in the *Bombay Chronicle*, Vol. X., No. 75, dak edition of 29th March 1922. It is essentially desirable in public interests that Government should honestly try to adopt all possible measures to promote temperance rather than retard the activities of the Indian public to root out intemperance and liquor traffic from India. I cannot for brevity's sake mention here all that has been done by Government officials to promote the habits of drink among all classes of people. Suffice it therefore to say that the actual results of the policy as it has been carried out in practice have been far from satisfactory and have run in a direction contrary to that contemplated by the Government of India.

3. I advocate a wholesale change in the Excise policy so as gradually to lead to complete prohibition of liquor as drink.

(*a*) The whole liquor and toddy department should be abolished and the administration handed over to the Revenue Department. Under the Bombay Legislative Council's Resolution, the Judicial is to be separated from the Executive and so far the Revenue Department is to be relieved of the burden of judicial work. It will not be burdensome to the Revenue Department if, in place of judicial work, it is entrusted with the administration of liquor and toddy. The Revenue Department has a good deal of facilities to

* Did not attend for oral evidence.

effectively carry on the Excise work. There are talatis and patels and village police (*ravaniàs*) in every village. There are Revenue Circle Inspectors constantly touring in the villages assigned to them. All these can very well keep an eye on illicit distillation. In addition to these, local punch may be appointed in each village of disinterested, intelligent leading men to assist the Revenue officers in stopping illicit distillation without unnecessary harassment to the innocent public.

(*b*) Liquor shops as they at present exist should be done away with. Government should find out with the help of the people suitable central places not more than 10 in a big taluka and 5 in a small one, where liquor depôts should be opened. Pure liquor of desirable strength (to be fixed in consultation with intelligent customers and gentlemen of the taluka and villages) and of a special colour should be kept ready in such depôts in sealed pint, half pint and one gallon bottles for sale. The bottles should be so sealed as not to admit of their being opened without detection. One or two or three men (as required) should be employed in the shop to sell the liquor bottles. These persons should be paid commission on the bottles sold. The rate of commission should be fixed by the Committee. Not more than one pint of liquor should be sold to one man in a day. The one gallon bottles should be sold to those persons only who produce a certificate from the punch (to be appointed for the purpose) or the police patel or any other persons empowered in that behalf, and that too, on occasions of festivities or marriages or deaths ; or to persons living at a distance (to be fixed) to be kept in stock for their daily consumption for a prescribed period. No person should be allowed to drink at or in the vicinity of the depôt. The hours for sale should be fixed from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. No charges for the bottle or jar should be made in cases where the customer offers a bottle or jar similar to the one full of liquor ; in other cases the actual price should be charged. The price for the sealed bottle should be invariably marked on the bottles and notified to the public by beat of drum in every village and the police patel or the punch should be empowered to receive complaints where higher prices are charged or bottles with broken seals are sold. A register should be maintained in each depôt containing the name and other particulars of each purchaser, the number of bottles sold to him, the price charged and the signature or thumb impression of the purchaser, etc. ; and it should be open to the public for inspection.

(*c*) Instead of farming out the manufacture of liquor, Government should establish their own factory in each district or one for two small districts to distil liquor of good and wholesome quality. There should be no idea of profiteering and so the price of liquor should not be fixed far above the cost price. Illicit distillation is resorted to, becasuse the liquor sold in shops is very dear. Consequently, if moderate price is fixed illicit distillation will stop without any trouble and of its own accord.

If these suggestions are adopted or if the working is put on some such line, the poor people will surely be saved more than half the money now spent by them on this ruinous stuff, and it will, in the long run, lead to complete prohibition with some occasional healthy checks.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition, but not at a stroke of the pen. The system may be so devised that it may lead to total prohibition, because liquor is a very harmful drink and creates a habit of drinking if taken daily. It works on the heart and lungs and I have seen many a young man dying premature deaths. The Hindu religious books as well as the Koran have both put a ban on the use of liquor. Liquor has lowered the morality of the country and increased crime. It has brought most of its devotees to starvation, nudity and ruin. If Government in right earnest take in hand the question of temperance and help the activities of the leaders to put a stop to liquor drinking, I am sure that total prohibition will result in a few years. I suggest, therefore, that at this auspicious juncture of public awakening, Government should work hand in hand with the leaders to bring about total prohibition. Government should impress upon the minds of the public the disadvantages of liquor and advise them to discontinue their habits of drinking. If Government sacrifice their revenue and advise the public, I am sure that it will not fall on deaf ears. The people will then see that Government who sacrifice their revenue and talk of temperance are in right earnest, and what with the efforts of Government and what with those of public leaders, good results will surely be brought about.

5. (*a*) If we find out the motive of illicit distillation, we can stop it by removing the cause. It is only because liquor obtained by illicit means becomes very very cheap in proportion to that sold in liquor shops that poor people themselves distil liquor. Another reason is that liquor so illicitly distilled is said to be better in quality than the shop liquor. Remove these two causes and you stop illicit manufacture without much trouble. I have therefore suggested in answer 3 above that there should be only Government distilleries, that liquor of good and wholesome quality should be supplied and that prices not far above the cost price charged. All these measures coupled with the present all-India campaign of non-co-operators against liquor will, I am confident, stop not only illicit manufacture but root out intemperance altogether within a few years, provided that Government lends a wholehearted support to their movement and advises the people to discontinue liquor. My experience as a Revenue officer, a Magistrate and a pleader, working in the Kaira District for 22 years, is that illicit distillation is very insignificant and that it is not worth the monies spent by Government on their vast, unnecessary and

highly paid establishment. The measures stated above and the vigilant eye of the Revenue Department officers to whom the administration of liquor may be entrusted will leave no scope for illicit distillation. If additional checks are still required you can make the punch and the community responsible for illicit distillation. If a village or a particular community therein is found to be incorrigibly bad in this respect, a punitive force for prevention and detection of illicit distillation should be established at the expense of that village or community after a due notice promulgated 3 months before the establishment. In such a measure calculated to improve the morals of the public and totally devoid of self interest on the part of Government, I am confident that Government will receive hearty co-operation and active assistance of the public and its leaders in stamping out the evil from the land. Government should only have the will, and means will not be found wanting.

(*b*) The policy of Indian States in all their departments is to follow the policy of the British Government with some slight changes according to local conditions where necessary. If, therefore, the British Government will change their policy and adopt measures to bring about total prohibition in their territories, not a single State will be found to adopt a policy contrary thereto. On the other hand, I am confident that seeing an alien Government inclined out of goodness and honesty of purpose to tend to complete prohibition, they will willingly accept that policy. If they do not, they will be compelled by their subjects to adopt this policy. It is a different question altogether with the Portuguese territory. The present cordon with respect thereto will, in my opinion, check the nuisance.

(*c*) Since the advent of the non-co-operation movement, every community in India has been trying to stamp out the evil and had not the shop-keepers assisted by Government officials worked in a contrary direction, a great advantage should have been reaped by this time. However, the results are palpable, and they go to satisfy us that public opinion is now deadly against liquor. There will not be any serious discontent among any community as far as my knowledge goes. It is simply an unfounded scare on the part of Government that serious discontent will arise. From December last, I have brought as labourers for the construction of my building from 30 to 60 Bhills from Dohad side and Jabhuva State and they have under my advice totally abstained from drink without any the least demur.

(*d*) The adoption of my suggestions made in answers 3 and 5 (*a*) will, I am sure, obviate the necessity of maintaining a large preventive establishment. The Revenue Department with its various officers and village police in each village is the largest establishment that Government can appoint. An Excise Inspector has at most 10 or 12 peons under him, whereas an average of 3 ravanias in a taluka of 50 to 100 villages is an establishment of 150 to 300 persons in a taluka.

(*e*) "Other intoxicants" known in Gujarat are opium, *ganja* and *charas*. Cocaine is known only to persons of big cities and is very difficult to obtain. Besides, it is very dear. The opium and *ganja* policy of Government has not been objected to and that policy, very harsh as it is, has nearly succeeded in reducing the number of their customers as the sales in every district can show. Again, those who willingly leave off liquor, being convinced of its injurious results, will not take to other intoxicants, as no intoxicant is beneficial to health.

6. I have answered this question above. It is undeniable that liquor consumption on a very large scale, as it is now, has kept the lower classes quite illiterate and ignorant at a time when civilization has all along been running high in every country, has stunted their growth and has depopulated them. The onslaught of influenza, that swept over this country the year before last, carried away millions of souls from these drinking communities. Whole villages of lower classes were devastated by the disease in forest areas and in parts inhabited by the Kaliparaj. Government show the revenue at 3 to 4 crores of rupees from Excise, but my experience tells me that more than thrice the money of the consumers is squandered in its consumption. I can therefore safely say that when the results of prohibition will be experienced by those who drink at present and its advantages realised, the very devotees of liquor will feel themselves relieved from the pest and will bless those who brought about prohibition and saved the country from the brink of ruin. I can confidentally say that the next generation will hardly know what liquor is if this generation succeeds in stamping it out of the country altogether.

7. Prohibition cannot, as I have said above, be brought about at a stroke of the pen. Prohibitive legislation however stringent will fail to bring it about. On the contrary, I fear, it will create misunderstanding among the drinking classes. We should know the trend of human nature. Human mind always covets the forbidden fruit. It is therefore highly necessary that the public should be educated in this respect by Government and the public leaders, and convinced by facts, figures and arguments that liquor is a stuff injurious to health and wealth and that therefore it is to be shunned in strict obedience to religious mandates. This, coupled with making liquor less accessible and liquor sales more public, will bring about the desired effect. In the scheme proposed by me I have stated that a register of sales should be maintained containing the names of and other particulars of the purchasers, liquor sold, and thumb impressions of the purchasers, etc., and that it should be open to the public for inspection. The leaders and Government will from this register know who are the persons addicted to drink. They will be

able thus to concentrate their energies on these persons and correct them. A legislation punishing those purchasers who give false names, etc., will ensure the correctness of the record. I am of opinion that side by side with the above, some sort of prohibitive legislation, apparently less rigorous and practically more effective, be devised to check the growth of intemperance.

8. Toddy fresh from the tree, unadulterated and a day old is not objectionable. It is a nourishing food if not fermented and taken fresh. I have no knowledge of shindi. Fermented toddy should be prohibited. All liquors distilled or fermented should in my opinion be prohibited as stated above.

9. This question is already answered.

10. (*a*) Rationing of shops will not reduce consumption. Government must manage the shops themselves through commission or salary-paid servants with the help of the punch and deal out liquor in sealed bottles.

(*b*) This has been tried and has failed. It will give an impetus for illicit distillation.

(*c*) I have recommended this. They should be as few and far between in central places.

(*d*) Already recommended. Liquor should as far as possible be sold during day time and not later than 6 p. m.

(*e*) Strength of liquor should be reduced gradually and imperceptibly.

(*f*) Answered in paragraph 3 above.

(*g*) Restriction in the importation of foreign liquor is extremely desirable. The duty must be raised as high as possible, so as to make such liquor available only to rich and luxuriant people. Licenses should be given in limited numbers to vendors of approved honesty in big cities inhabited by not less than 50,000 souls.

(*h*) Answered.

(*i*) Females and minors should not be sold liquor.

(*j*) This is quite necessary. It is this measure that will bring about total prohibition. There should be rules to dismiss all Government servants who are found to drink liquor. The Police Department is notorious for its drinking habits. It is the District Police that has been found to be encouraging illicit distillation. If this Department is weeded out of all these low drunkards, the morale of the police will be highly improved, the police administration will be more capable and law and order well preserved. Such a measure on the part of Government will ensure public confidence.

(*k*) Answered. I have all throughout my answers made constructive proposals.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. No liquor shops should be kept in talukas that do not require such shops. Public notices should therefore be posted in the chowras of villages and, if not more than half the adult male population of the taluka comes forward demanding liquor shops, no shop should be located in the taluka. If this is not feasible, there should be the system of taking votes by responsible officers after making the disadvantages known to the voters at the time of the election. Before the commencement of the taking of votes, members and leaders of the public should be allowed to make speeches on temperance and then votes for and against should be recorded. If a majority of voters demands liquor shops, then such shops should be located in central places.

12. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. These bodies do not in these days properly represent public opinion. The method suggested in paragraph 11 above will be more effective in this matter. As regards revenues Government must, with due respect for public opinion, be prepared to sacrifice them. If liquor is as a moral principle to be stamped out, no consideration of loss of revenue can arise. A bad thing is a bad thing and it has to be given up at any cost.

13. No useful output of work has been shown by the advisory committees. They are not known even to the general public. It is for Government to see if they have really proved to be of any advantage. Advisory committees of temperance workers are desirable.

14. Yes. Crime has increased and the more so, as the police, who have so to say monopolised and patronized the vice of drinking for their Department have been encouraging it. Those who themselves drink afford a very bad lesson to the criminal classes who are used in procuring liquor. Drunkenness has led to poverty and poverty has led to crimes.

15. Loss of revenue should not be made up by extra taxation, but by retrenchment in the salaries of highly paid officers, reductions in other expenses that may be found on enquiry in each department to be redundant and by some such other means. Money saved is money earned. If, after doing so much, there is found to be a reasonable deficit, I do not think that the public of India would demur to some reasonable taxation, say, a slight increase in the duty on salt or such other articles of necessity.

16. No. While conducting temperance movements, provision should be made to point out to the public the disadvantages of opium and hemp drugs, and I am sure that along with liquor they too will gradually be stamped out.

17. There is no regular custom on this side of the country of giving opium to young children. I am not aware of such a custom in any other part of India. I know of opium being given in one or other form to restless children, *e. g.*, in the form of baby pills prescribed in native books on medicine. These pills contain many other vegetable drugs and the quantity of opium is very little in one pill. I have found these pills wonderfully agreeable to the health of babies under 2 years of age. I do not know of babies over 2 years of age being given such pills. Where such pills are not available, ignorant mothers might be giving opium in crude form. Such cases may have led to accidents, but they are too few and far between to be taken notice of. The Penal Code deals with the causing of death by rash or negligent acts and such cases may be dealt with under that law. Baby pills have not been found to increase the death rate. They are found to be wholesome.

H 1366—98

No. 99.

REPLIES FROM MR. BHAGWANDAS G. DESAI* B.A., LL.B., VICE-PRESIDENT, DISTRICT LOCAL BOARD, KAIRA.

1. I am a High Court Vakil and I had opportunities to gain some experience about the question as President of the Nadiad Taluka Local Board and Vice-President of the Kaira District Local Board as well as a Councillor of the Nadiad Municipality. I also base my opinion on general personal observation and inquiry.

2. (1) With regard to the Excise policy laid down by the Government of India in its Resolution, Finance Department, No. 5001-Ex., dated 7th September 1905, I beg to state that in my humble opinion the policy laid down therein is neither a sound one nor free from objections. It does not lay down any hard and fast rules and is liable to vary with the attitude taken by Provincial Governments and the Minister in charge of the Department in this matter. It is in my humble opinion the paramount duty of the state to maintain, protect and uphold public health and morality which, it is an acknowledged fact at least in India, is substantially affected and jeopardised by the use of alcohols by a very large part of the population of this country.

(2) The habit of using alcohols is looked upon in India as harmful and immoral and is calculated to affect the health as well as the morality of the people addicted to it. The Hindu as well as Mahomedan scriptures have vehemently prohibited and condemned the use of alcohols since times immemorial and have banned this habit as a heinous sacrilege and vice and ordained very severe and uncompromising punishments to be inflicted upon the culprits who offended against those holy commandments. This proscription and ban, pronounced by scriptures upon the habit of drinking, I most plainly admit, operated in pre-British times as a most wholesome and effective safeguard and check against such mischievous and profligate propensities of the people to take to drinking, so much so, that the person addicted to the vice of drinking was shunned by respectable society and was practically ostracised from all communal connections and relations.

(3) This religious and moral control over individual vagaries and fancies to indulge into various obnoxious and harmful habits, such as drinking and addiction to other similar vices, exercised through communal and panchayat courts, which existed in ancient India, is now completely annihilated and shattered in modern India, owing to the introduction of Western ideals of democracy and individualism and notions of individual freedom and liberty in the sphere not only of the political, but also of the religious, social and moral life of this country these innovated ideals have nowadays been allowed to permeate so deeply in the fabric of Indian society that the old Indian life and ideals are completely revolutionized, transformed and effaced beyond trace or recognition so much so that this implantation and grafting of Western ideals on the old Indian sentiments, habits and ideals have brought about a very grotesque divorce between the habits, ideals and life of ancient and modern India and has left only individuals to lead a life of constant worries and anxieties misnamed as free and independent life. But East is East and West is West and both must ever remain as such unaffected and unmixed if the lofty ideals of peace, contentment and justice are to reign and prevail in the society at large. In these circumstances, therefore, it is but quite essential that Government should recognise that similar checks and restrains should now be restored by definite legislation in order to save this country from further ruin and degradation.

(4) It is, however, very unfortunate that this most noble and important duty and function of the state to check and prevent the tendency of its subjects to indulge in obnoxious habits and harmful vices, which was recognised as a paramount duty of the state in ancient India and is also recognised by all civilized states in modern times, has now been considered by the Indian Government to be " outside its duty ". However, it is gratifying to find that even the Indian Government itself has recognised this part of its duty in by-gone times and has actually taken up and sanctioned legislative enactments to prevent individuals from inflicting harm and demoralising themselves by various acts such as suicide, smoking of maddat, chandul and other intoxicating drugs, which are clearly not offences against public morality or peace but do concern only individual and personal debasement, ruin and degradation, and has all along thus deemed it expedient and necessary to interfere with individual habits, etc., whenever they appeared to be harmful or obnoxious, with a view to improve and uplift individuals from leading a debased and immoral life. Again, when Government has never waited to care much for public opinion when it deemed expedient or was called upon by unusual exigencies of the time to carry out various legislations, of course in public interest, it is surprising to find Government to be so very calculating and unwilling and diffident in undertaking such a salutary and long called for legislation to eradicate an acknowledged moral and physical evil on the excuse of public discontent and that too mainly of drunkard and criminal tribes. Therefore, the Government cannot palpably now argue, in face of these hard facts, that it has no desire to or cannot interfere with individual habits when it is confronted with this most vital and emergent question of eradicating this universal evil of the civilized age which amply justifies the curtailment of individual freedom to any necessary extent; for no individual can be allowed to use and enjoy his

*Did not attend for oral evidence.

freedom in a manner detrimental to his own welfare, even though he may voluntarily desire to do so, of his own free will and desire. Society is made up of individuals and an individual is not the least negligible factor of the same and it is a well known fact that individual demoralization and debasement do always contribute their contagion to society and do considerably affect public weal and morality. Therefore, there is as much necessity to effectively regulate individual life and to prevent its being a prey to such evils as drinking, etc., as it is incumbent upon Government to attend to the attainment and security of public well-being and morality. Both are interdependent and do move hand in hand and one cannot be neglected without involving the other in danger. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to undertake some bold, vigorous and deterrent legislation in this behalf without the least hesitation and delay and that the Government should not shirk this noble task before it which it has been called upon by the unanimous voice of the Indian nation to perform and discharge at such a most critical time in the history of India.

(5) Besides it is known to be the constant anxiety of Government to uplift and better the conditions of the depressed classes and it has taken up various salutary measures in right earnest in this direction since some years past, but it has been unfortunately unable to discover the root cause of their poverty and ignorance, namely, the habit of intoxication to which most of the members of depressed classes are addicted and which must be eradicated by strong legislative enactments in order to achieve substantial and prompt results in the promotion of the welfare of these depressed classes. It may be remarked here that these depressed classes who form a very hugh portion of the Indian population do spontaneously extend the infection of their habits of intoxication and drinking to the upper classes who form but a minor portion of the Indian population and this infection, it should not be lost sight of, has been gaining its grounds and firmly germinating amongst the civilized upper classes, resulting in a wide-spread habit of drinking, etc., amongst them, and its effects have reached a very appreciable degree now. It behoves Government, therefore, to be more consistent with its avowed policy and undertake without the least hesitation the necessary legislation to eradicate this deep rooted evil without delay.

(6) In my humble opinion the adoption of the policy of increasing the tax on liquor will not prove to be an effective and expedient method to minimise, discourage or check the temptation to drink, for, the people who are addicted to drinking would continue to drink to the same extent as they are habituated to do at present, irrespective and regardless of the price or cost they may have to pay or incur for indulging in this obnoxious habit to which they are wedded and enslaved till life. The result of increasing the tax on liquor would only become an increasing source of income to Government on that account without causing the least fall in the total consumption of liquor which is, on the other hand, increasing from year to year in spite of the Mhowra Flowers Act and various other restrictions prescribed under that Act expressly with the object of bringing about the reduction in the consumption of liquors. It would further result in the increase of the price of labour and food stuffs as a necessary consequence thereof and would only tend to further disturb the balance of economic adjustment which has already made the living of people in this country unbearably expensive and uneasy since the last few years. Moreover, any rise in the tax on liquor is sure to accelerate and stimulate illicit distillation howsoever strictly the Excise Department may exert itself to check or detect the same, for it is impossible for the Excise Department to exercise any effective control over the large and scattered population of this class of people, with any amount of establishment under its control.

(7) (*a*) The restriction as to the number of shops would in my humble opinion substantially help to minimise the temptation to drink to some extent but the reduction in the total consumption will not likely be effected, for it is more or less a psycological matter connected with individual habits and propensities engraved on weak and feeble minds since years.

(*b*) I have not been able to notice any appreciable good results worth mentioning in the working of the present system. I am of opinion that the present policy is far from effective and drunkenness is steadily increasing in spite of it. I think it is high time now that the present policy should be completely overhauled as soon as possible. If there is any appreciable reduction in the consumption of liquor in the last 2 years it can be safely attributed as a result of the non-co-operation movement and not in the least to the present system.

3. In view of the changes advocated by me in the above paragraphs, I beg to suggest that Government should undertake some effective legislative enactments of a definite and imperative character to gradually minimise the temptation to drink, with the ultimate goal to eradicate this vice by total prohibition. Other detailed suggestions are embodied in the succeeding paragraphs.

4. Yes. I am in favour of total prohibition and the same should be accomplished by stages. The country, its climate, religions and habits do not need intoxicating drinks. I think the needs and habits to drink will and do grow and have actually grown all these years with the increase in facilities to obtain liquors at hand. My reasons for holding such an opinion is contained in my reply to question No. 2. The only practical measure to accomplish this is in my opinion by legislative enactments prohibiting the habit of drinking liquors and penalizing the breach of the said enactments as an offence with necessary provisions.

5 (*a*) A record of such trees should be maintained and the growth of trees for the future should be discouraged by levying heavy and prohibitive license fees thereon, and by totally prohibiting the extracting of liquor from such trees without licenses which may be issued on strict conditions.

(*b*) I am unable to answer this question fully for it is an Imperial matter. However, it may be stated that, if a person is found drunk in British territory, he will be punished irrespective of the place from where he obtained the intoxicant. The British Government may enact necessary laws for its provinces and its effects will automatically reach and affect Indian States territories without any special attempts. The Indian States may be safely left alone to take care of themselves.

(*c*) Government need not mind any discontent that may be caused by its interference with the habit and carelessness of some people in this behalf, for, the temporary discontent that may be caused would be far more compensated by the benefits and advantages achieved in the end. I do not think there is any possibility of serious discontent being caused by the adoption of such a measure. Government has always shown extraordinary firmness in carrying out many legislative enactments, even against the wishes of the people, when they were convinced of their expediency and urgency or when they deemed them to be justified by the exigencies of the times. There is, therefore, no reason why Government should now hesitate to think of discontent, etc., that such a salutary and urgent measure may cause amongst unappreciative and ignorant masses who are unable to look to their own welfare. Government must make itself strong enough to face such an odium for the sake of relieving the vast humanity and heterogenous population of this country from the evil effects of such an all pervading vice and prove themselves worthy of the noble task, namely, emancipation and uplifting of the Indian people which their worthy predecessors have set before them as a pious duty.

(*d*) The Preventive establishment to be maintained for coping with the above purposes need not consist of highly paid officials. Local volunteers may be invited by public notice and selected after due inquiry into their characters and fitness to undertake such work and I am sure even many gentlemen will willingly come forth to assist Government in this noble work in these days of all-round awakening and may be engaged on moderate salaries just sufficient to defray their moderate out-of-pocket expenses. Such volunteers may be easily induced to come forward from many villages and should only be entrusted with the work within the limits of that particular village or a group of villages in which they actually reside. The adoption of this simple and cheap system will relieve Government from lot of unnecessary expenses on this account and would at once solve this problem which at first sight presents various obstacles and difficulties in working it out.

(*e*) This is more or less in my humble opinion a chimerical fear and does not seem to have been justified either by any precedents or actual results obtained or ascertainable from any reliable statistics. Government, however, should take vigilant care to prevent the importation of other deleterious drugs into British territory from neighbouring Indian States or foreign countries without license, if necessary, and the illegal possession thereof should be made a penal offence.

6. I perfectly endorse the argument. The results achieved by the adoption of the policy of total prohibition will no doubt be gradual, but will, I am quite sure, within a few years reach the desired goal and attain solid and substantial results worthy of record in this material age. The results of adopting prohibitive legislation will have a high effect not only on the next but will have decidedly a marked effect on the present generation also.

7. I am of opinion that prohibitive legislation is the only effective way to bring about complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquors and is quite sure to produce the desired results, though gradually. But, by the by, I beg to suggest that the wholesome effects of lectures delivered through itinerant lecturers, magic lantern shows, etc., should not be underrated or ignored. This would in my humble opinion facilitate and prepare the ground for the working of the legislative enactments in this behalf by infusing broadcast knowledge and information regarding the evil results of drinking in the minds of the ignorant masses. Government will therefore be well advised in adopting this measure and organizing lectures and magic lantern shows in villages also, side by side with legislative enactments in this behalf. Another effective method of working out the policy advocated by me would be to compel all intending purchasers of liquor and other intoxicating drugs to register their names, and licenses stating the quantity they are to be allowed to buy may be issued to them and they may obtain the liquor or other drugs from the shops run by Government. This suggestion is made only as a means to an end, *i.e.*, total prohibition. By this method it will be easy to accomplish the goal, namely, total prohibition by diminishing the quantity allowed to each individual so registered and their number will also gradually and steadily fall by persuasive and other methods.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors, whether distilled or fermented, without any distinction making exceptions only on medical grounds and under expert advice. The distilled liquors may be totally prohibited, while toddy and shindy may be allowed to be used as a beverage only for a certain hour after their extraction.

9. I am of opinion that absolute prohibition is quite feasible and desirable and hence no more reply to the question appears necessary.

10. I do not believe in the least in the efficacy of the adoption of the means suggested in clauses (*b*), (*d*), (*e*), (*f*) and they are bound to be totally devoid of any appreciable effect and as for the means suggested in clauses (*a*), (*c*) (*g*), (*h*), (*i*), (*j*) and (*k*) I am of opinion that the adoption of all these suggestions *simultaneously* and strictly would certainly contribute to lessen the temptation to drink and reduce the consumption of liquors in a substantial degree in the immediate future. All these suggestions should be applied to Government shops, as well as private shops opened under contract or licenses from Government.

11. I am not personally in favour of local option at all, for the same is not likely to be exercised by mature considerations looking to the want of law-abiding and the absence of the spirit of straightforward thinking and unselfish considerations amongst the masses. It should be entirely a question left to be determined by the district excise advisory committee. But, if the principle of local option is advocated by many others, I would suggest that the same be ascertained by votes and if three-fourths of the adult majority of the inhabitants of a village or town or city are in favour of opening liquor shops in these villages, towns and cities in particular numbers, they may be permitted to do so.

12. Yes, I support the suggestion of investing local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas under the guidance of the district advisory committee. I do not think local bodies should at all be made responsible for raising any part of the deficit in revenue caused by the said measure, for all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated to the public weal as laid down by the Government of India in their statement of policy in this behalf.

13. The present advisory committees are no doubt properly constituted and are quite representative but their functions and duties being not clearly prescribed and there being no scope of work for them under the existing system and in the absence of definite duties and functions being prescribed to them, they are unworkable at present.

14. I do not think the evil of drink in ordinary cases contributes to an increase of crime as was argued by Government at the time of the introduction of the Mhowra Flowers Act. The criminality is a tendency of mind which has been brought about by physical and mental degeneration which may be ascribed to drinking. The Mhowra Flowers Act was introduced to reduce this evil *but the actual result of it was increase in the consumption of liquor and the consequent increase of revenue,* the criminality all the same remaining *status quo ante* without any appreciable increase. The actual results do justify my conclusion. As for output of work it is certainly affected inasmuch as the habit of drinking liquors causes physical degeneration and induces a habit of laziness and indolence in the persons addicted to it.

15. The deficit in revenue or extinction thereof which may be caused by the partial or total prohibition of liquors may be raised by raising the rates levied for income tax and curtailment of expenditure on account of various higher posts in the Educational, Postal, Revenue, Judicial, Public Works and Excise Establishments, salaried at above Rs. 200 per mensem, by proportionately reducing the number of such posts and their increments and gradations with a firm and bold hand; for, the salaries of higher posts in these departments were recently enhanced beyond reasonable limits, which is the root cause of the present financial embarrassment. The special excise establishment itself would be quite unnecessary, in view of the above suggestions made by me and its function may be safely delegated to the local police, or the police and the excise department may be amalgamated so as to bring about the reduction of the expenditure on account of the Excise Department. I also beg to suggest, by the by, that the entire proceeds of the income tax should be allotted to provincial purposes like land revenue and should not be reserved for Imperial purposes as at preset in order to tide over the apprehended financial difficulties in this behalf. The Imperial Government may invent new sources of income for their purposes, if necessary, to make up the deficit caused by this measure.

16. I am of opinion that the sale of opium and hemp drugs should not be entirely prohibited but should only be allowed to be used on medical grounds under a medical certificate of a native physician or any other competent medical man. For individual consumption the saleable quantity of these drugs at a time should be greatly reduced verging on insignificance. The use of these drugs by private individuals as a habit should also be strictly restricted by legislation with a goal to complete prohibition. It is, however, a matter more in the hand of Government but the attempt to reduce their consumption would surely be welcome.

17. The custom of giving opium to children in comparatively a very mild proportion, along with other medicines, has been prevalent since generations past but has been greatly abandoned and is rapidly waning since some years past. This custom is prevalent in almost all classes in varying degrees, and is not restricted to any particular caste. It is usually given to children as a tonic to lend tone to their general health. As far as I know this custom has always contributed to give tone and strength to children's health and has never been known to affect death-rate amongst them. The matter is more clearly thrashed out in the Royal Opium Commission's Report published in about 1895 wherein voluminous evidence is recorded on this subject.

No. 100.

*Replies of Khan Saheb A. M. MANSURI, M. L. C.

1.—I am a medical man as also a merchant having to deal mostly with outdoor work in either capacity.

2.—The policy of the Government of India as laid down in their Resolution, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of the 7th September 1905 is the most suitable one for putting an effective check on intemperance and it has been found most practical.

3.—The only change is rationing of liquor shops and limiting its possession to one bottle instead of six as at present.

4.—I am not at all in favour of total prohibition. It is impracticable; if it is enforced, it will end in disaster. People will take to deleterious drugs and also drink denatured spirits, etc., and wherever facilities exist illicit distillation will be ripe.

6.—The argument is not at all sound. The people have been habituated to take liquor for several generations and only gradually this can be checked by allowing them the minimum quantity. It will be found from enquiries that the Indians who are habituated to taking alcoholic drinks have initiated the habit with western education. The educated classes among them now drink foreign spirits.

7.—To prohibit drink by legislation is not in any case desirable. It is advisable to educate the school children and give them to understand the evils of drink, by lectures and lessons on temperance.

8.—Wherever possible the sale of toddy should be encouraged in preference to spirituous drinks. Fermented liquor has not been known to appeal to Indians.

9 *and* 10.—The arguments put forward in paragraph 10 are very sound for curtailing consumption.

11.—The Collector of the district and the officers of the Excise Department who come in contact with the people are in a better position to suggest how to control consumption.

12.—I would suggest that the public bodies should not be allowed any interference with regard to excise policy. The local officers quoted in paragraph 11 are quite capable to do the needful in the cause of temperance.

13.—The existing advisory committees are a failure; the local officers always consult public opinion before submitting any proposals on the subject and the same can be continued.

14.—To a certain extent heavy drinking contributes to crime as also to the misfortune of the individual drunkard. I do think, on the other hand, there are people in mills and factories who need some sort of stimulant after a day's hard work and to deprive them of it would be to drive them to take to more deleterious drugs, such as cocaine, ganja, etc.

15.—I cannot recommend for the measure enumerated above in 5 absolute exinction of excise revenue for it is not at all possible.

16.—The suggestion put forth in paragraph 10 can gradually be put in force as regards opium and hemp drugs as well.

17.—Opium is given to children by their mothers among the low labouring classes who go out to work in order to sleep them quiet during their absence. In the case of 'balagoli' it often happens that an overdose is sometimes given. For instance, an adult member of the family gives his or her little brother or sister some opium and the mother not knowing of this also gives the baby some opium. In some cases death has been the result. The children who eat opium are generally unhealthy and suffer from rickets. It is necessary to check the practice as far as possible.

* Did not attend for oral evidence.

No. 101.

*Replies of Sardar Khan Bahadur RUSTOMJI J. VAKIL, President,, District Local Board, Ahmedabad.

1. I am a partner in the firm of Government Salt Agents for the sale of Baragra salt manufactured at Kharaghoda. Likewise was I partner for several years in the firm of Vakil and Company, Abkari Contractors in the District of Thana, until the introduction of the system familiarly known as the 'Madras System'. In the latter capacity, I believe, I have had a few opportunities of forming an opinion on some of the questions drawn up by the Excise Committee. I am President of the District Local Board.

2. My opinion generally on the excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Financial Department, No. 5001—Exc. of 7th September 1905, is that the attempts on the part of the Government to put an effective check on intemperance have proved abortive.

3,7, 9, 10. I would prefer to deal with these questions last.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition, as I consider it to be an impractical measure, and almost impossible to accomplish without augmenting facilities for obtaining liquor by illicit means and entailing upon Government considerable expenditure in the shape of maintaining a preventive organization on a collosal basis to cope with illicit distillation and smuggling from Indian States and Portuguese territory, not to speak of the certain probability of people resorting to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs as substitutes.

5. I would favour partial prohibition to start with, which might in course of time lead to total prohibition by slow degrees, without having to incur huge loss incidental to maintenance of a preventive staff and causing serious discontent amongst the people.

6. Men of science, as far as hereditary transmission of drink habit is concerned, are still at variance. There are not very many cases of such transmission on record; some of them prove very little, and experiments are being performed, mostly on lower animals, to study the effects of alcoholism on germ-cells and on future generations. But prohibition can, I believe, have salutary influence upon the future generations, inasmuch as the drinking instinct not having had scope for development in them, inducement for going out of their way to satisfy their spasmodic propensities for drink would be very little.

7. This is answered along with question No. 3.

8. I would not recommend any check upon the use of toddy as I believe it to be harmless.

11, 12, 13. I would leave absolute control and supervision of the Excise administration with Government alone. I am not in favour of investing local bodies with any power, as dual management in this case is sure to lead to conflict of authority and discontentment amongst the people. I must however say that the local bodies concerned must be consulted in the matter of the number and location of liquor shops in their respective areas, and their opinion given due weight.

14. Yes.

15. People are already sufficiently heavily taxed and I would hesitate to make any suggestions that might directly or indirectly lead to increase taxation for the purpose of making up the possible deficit, consequent upon reduction of revenue in excise.

16. I do not think that any modification is needed in the matter of prohibitions and restrictions that at present exist.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is widely prevalent amongst the working class people who administer the drug with a view to keep the children quiet during the hours of work. To a very limited extent the practice prevails amongst the better classes of Hindus and Mahomedans also, under an impression, probably a mistaken one, that the drug keeps the children in fit condition and acts as a prophylactic against the invasion of many diseases. As regards the latter part of the question I am not able to give a definite opinion.

3, 7, 9, 10. In the light of recently acquired scientific knowledge the whole excise policy of the Government of India, would, in my opinion, need considerable modification; in other words it should be entirely revised. In the first place, with a view to make the issues clear, Government must take up a definite attitude as to what it intends doing with alcohol in its relation with the people whether (1) to let it exist as a source of revenue, or (2) to recognise its pernicious influence and to prevent people from using it, in the belief that the alcoholic drink is not only an evil in itself but a source of other evils from which it is the duty of Government to protect its subjects. I take it for granted that the Indian Government do not want to adopt an excise policy solely with a view to realise revenue, but that its primary aim is to save its subjects from the evil effects resulting from the use of alcohol. If that be the primary aim of the Government, I am not sure whether this object could be completely achieved without substantially modifying the present excise policy, and in that case the Government cannot ignore the fact on which, now-a-days, few men of science disagree, *viz.*, in the words of Sir Victor Horsely, F.R.S., F.R.C.S.,

* Did not attend for oral evidence.

M.B.B.S., etc., Dr. Mary D. Sturge, M.D., and Dr. Arthur Newsholme, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H., who after exhaustively treating the subject in its individual as well as national aspects, give the following as almost the last word :—" We are compelled to conclude that what is commonly described as moderate drinking has a most injurious influence on health and life and that the best practice, both in the interests of health and morality, consists in the avoidance of all alcoholic drinks as a beverage ", in which case the Government will not be bound to make any provision for moderate drinkers, if they want to embark on a policy of total prohibition ultimately.

Now I beg to offer a few humble suggestions of mine as to how partial prohibition can be introduced as a start :—

(*a*) In my opinion no measure of external coercion or what we call in other words compulsory prohibition can bring about such a reform in the drink habit of the masses as one may expect to find when those addicted to drink begin to think for themselves. It is well-known that drink evil exists side by side with the other evils such as ignorance and illiteracy, bad housing, bad company, want of healthy amusements, etc.

(*b*) Heavy drinking as well as offences as a consequence thereof should not be so lightly penalised as it is done at present. Special legislation should be devised to meet this end.

(*c*) Temperance societies should be given encouragement and support by Government in their efforts to guide the masses by lecturing them against the evils of drink. Total elimination of the drink habit is not possible until and unless the people themselves begin to understand and realise the serious consequences resulting from drink and are able to exercise self-restraint and largely help themselves.

(*d*) Shops must be rationed on the basis of gradual reduction.

(*e*) Price of liquor should be increased.

(*f*) Number of shops should be reduced.

(*g*) Days and particularly the hours of shops should be reduced.

(*h*) Strength of liquor should not be under 60° U. P.

(*i*) Too much attention and care cannot be bestowed upon the location of shops.

(*j*) Persons under 21 years of age should not be served at any liquor shop.

(*k*) No liquor in howsoever small a quantity should be permitted to be removed from the shop premises, without a special permit from a responsible officer.

(*l*) And the last and most important step towards achieving the object in view would in my opinion be the introduction of the Bombay system which existed prior to the year 1905 in the Presidency, *viz.*, the system of farming the manufacture and sale of country liquor through respectable contractors to be chosen by Government as their agents, on such terms as may be mutually beneficial both to the Government as well as the farmers consistent with the fact that the ultimate object is to gradually eliminate drink habit. Auctioning of the liquor shops is a system which cannot be too strongly condemned as one calculated directly to encourage consumption, especially in view of the fact that it is to the interest of the successful bidder to sell as much more liquor as he possibly can, first to be able to recover the amount of his high bid and then to get as much more in the shape of profit. It will not be out of place to mention that by the adoption of the farming system through respectable contractors who in their turn would appoint their own reliable men on monthly salaries or fixed remuneration to sell out liquor at various shops in their respective districts, chances of making money by stimulating sales are very much minimised. Moreover, by the introduction of the Bombay system, employment of a complicated machinery, such as contractors for the distillation of liquor and also a large number of shop-keepers of any reputation, good or bad, is done away with. The proposed innovation will also have this advantage that the supervising staff of the Government can be safely curtailed, as only such farmers of unimpeachable respectability and credit would be selected who command the full confidence of the Government and who can at all times be relied upon to co-operate with the Government as well as the public in accomplishing the object for the attainment of which we are straining every nerve, regardless of the cost to the State.

No. 102.

## Replies of Mr. DHANABHAI NARSIBHAI PATEL* of Borsad.

1. I am a pleader by profession and have been practising for the last 16 years. During this time I have come in contact with the classes which are addicted to drink.

2. (*a*) The policy of Government as appears from a desire not to interfere with the habits of those who are moderate in drink appears sound on paper, but it is not so in results. It requires to be changed. Henceforth the policy of Government should be to prohibit drinking by gradual steps.

(*b*) The results of the policy are well-known. Instead of decreasing, it has increased the number of drunkards. Also it has utterly failed in putting any check on intemperance.

3. The policy requires to be changed. Simply to take steps to minimise temptations to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who drink would not prove effective and it has so proved. The settled policy should be to prohibit drinking, and to reach that goal all the necessary and legal steps should be taken so that those who do not drink may hardly be tempted to drink and those who do drink may gradually give up that habit. Once this becomes the settled policy of Government most effective methods may be invented to further it.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition all at once. It must be prohibited step by step and it must cease to be prevalent within some years.

Drinking is in no way useful for human existence. It may prove useful in cold climate but in the hot climate as that of India, it is in no way useful. Not only that but it impairs health and brain. It may be giving temporary relief but that is nothing compared to the harm which it causes. The thing the use of which is so very harmful ought not to be encouraged by Government even though it may be paying.

Gradual prohibition may be carried out effectively.

5. (*a*) The objections are not so very weighty. Drinking is not to be prohibited at once. Those who want it may get it and they would not have to resort to illicit distillation. The young generation would get no chances to catch that habit, if prohibition steps are taken and so, after the present drinking generation is extinct, there would remain no fear on that side. Besides, illicit distillation can be checked.

(*b*) Indian States would follow the example of this Government. If this Government lays down a certain policy I do not think the States would fail to adopt it.

(*c*) Customs which are immoral and opposed to public policy ought not to be encouraged. They would disappear in no time if no official countenance is given to them. Habits if bad ought to be cured. Bad habits should not be encouraged.

(*d*) The Excise establishment at present existing is more than sufficient for any purpose. Even a reduced number of persons would successfully cope with the work, if they are made to go after it. And so in my opinion the preventive work would not prove more costly.

(*e*) The general tone of the public is for prohibition. Most of the people are drinking, because there exist facilities for it. The moment these facilities disappear they would cease drinking. A few hard persons would remain but they are to be provided with drink though under some restrictions.

6. The argument is sound and I fully concur in it.

7. There ought to be legislative prohibition.

8. I have no personal experience of toddy or shindi.

9. Some of the means to be adopted are stated in no. 10. I would add some more at that place.

10. The means as stated here would prove preventive. But I would add some more which would prove more effective.

(*i*) Those who want to drink must get their names registered in a special register kept for the purpose. No body but one who is so registered can be furnished with liquor from any shop. The registration work should be entrusted to some judicial officer.

(*ii*) The system of giving licenses to the highest bidders should be stopped at once. It is due to this system that drinking has increased. It is to the interest of these licenses to get more customers and they are found taking all pains to secure as many customers as possible. In the face if these persons decrease in drinking can never be expected whatever may be the policy in the mind of Government. This class of persons should disappear and shops should be entrusted to well paid Government servants. These latter persons would not have any private end to serve.

11. I am not in favour of this principle of local option. It is impracticable.

---

* Did not attend for oral evidence.

12. I am strongly in favour of investing municipalities and local boards with the powers mentioned in this clause. These bodies are the best persons to judge of the requirements of the people within their jurisdiction. I do not understand why these bodies should not have these powers, whereby they can do some good to the public.

If any loss accrues from the divesting of these powers, Government should bear it. These bodies whose financial position is generally so bad should not be taxed more. Government should not grudge the loss if it accrues, if a good purpose is served.

13. I can at present form no opinion on the importance of these Advisory Committees. Till now no work was required of them, and it would depend upon the work entrusted to them whether they would prove useful or not. If the policy of gradual prohibition be adopted and the strict methods to minimise drinking are put into operation, these Advisory Committees would prove of great importance to carry out the working of the methods.

14. The evil of drink greatly contributes to an increase in crime. Also it tells upon the working capacity of the persons addicted to it.

15. There would result reduction and, some time after, absolute extinction of excise revenue. But the loss in revenue resulting therefrom should be made up in one way or the other. The best way is to reduce the expenditure in the several Departments of Government. There are some Departments which can be efficiently worked at reduced expenditure. It is no use keeping highly paid men for certain works when those works can be carried out with less paid men. So in my humble opinion the loss accruing from the cessation of excise revenue would be made up by reduction in the expenditure of other Departments. There would remain no necessity for a further taxation.

16. The number of opium eaters is reduced to a great extent on this side; and I think the habit of opium eating would disappear in a few years, whatever may be the settled policy of Government.

## No. 103.

### Replies (in Gujarati) of Mr. JAMSHEDJI DINSHAJI KARAKA* Ahmedabad.

Different views are expressed and various measures suggested to reduce the consumption of liquor and eradicate the drink evil. I also express my views on the subject.

Every kind of intoxicant is destructive of life and money. Picketing can never stop the drink evil. It is also difficult to control the consumption by the present rationing system introduced during the current year. I shall explain it by an illustration :—In Ahmedabad liquor shops remained closed twice, for one month and two months respectively. But Waghris and mill labourers and other workers used to be seen overdrunk daily. Picketing was also resorted to last year. The consumption of liquor, however, did not lessen. The more you try to take away from a man a thing of which he is fond, the more he is attracted towards it. I will give two or three instances of this fact. Many years ago in Rajkot Camp was stationed the 17th Native Infantry. Its Commanding Officer was Major Alexander, a very handsome looking and brave man. He had contracted the very bad habit of overdrinking. His wife, who was also a good woman, tried to wean him from his evil habit. She requested every country and foreign liquor dealer (in Rajkot) to refrain from supplying liquor to her husband, because she gave him the requisite quantity twice daily at home. She had given similar instructions to the orderlies and was keeping a very strict watch on her husband. If the officer went out at any hours other than those of his service, she used to accompany him ; she gave her husband one peg in the noon and one in the evening, but he was not satisfied with that. At last he made friendship with the sweeper employed at the bungalow. He gave monies to this sweeper who placed every day a bottle of wine in the pot while putting it back in the commode after cleaning it, and thus he got his drink in the closet. The lady wondered how her husband got overdrunk even though he did not stir out of the bungalow. At last one day the above fact came to her knowledge. I give another instance. When I was young, a Parsi named Dadabhai, who was a great drunkard, fell ill and was on his death-bed. His sister asked me then to sit by his cot and placing two glasses before me, one containing syrup and the other wine, instructed me to pour in the sick man's mouth a little of the contents of the glasses at intervals in order that he may not feel quite thirsty. When I poured syrup in his mouth, he made such a wry face as if he was administered poison, and when I poured wine, his face appeared joyful as if he derived great satisfaction. Such becomes the condition of a drunkard at the time of his death. How can then picketing stop the evil ? I also give a third instance. I had a Parsi friend who was a resident of Ahmedabad. When I was living in Bombay, he had come to Bombay and put up at a Parsi *dharmashala*. I then told him that to take wine with tea in the early morning was very bad. When I saw him that day he had not taken his tea and I asked him to swear to refrain from drinking wine with tea in the morning from that day. He gave me an undertaking to follow my advice. After I left the *dharmashala* he requisitioned tea and took also in his hand a bottle of wine. The son of the keeper of the *dharmashala* ran to me and told me that my friend was taking wine with tea. Immediately I went to his room and admonished him saying that (it was a pity) he could not control himself a single day even once. I want to prove by those instances that either picketing or ration system will not check the drink evil. My opinion is that liquor which is meant for consumption should be of 60 U. P. instead of 40 and 60 U. P. as is the case at present. Its price should be lower than that of foreign liquor. The importation of liquors of the Alembic Works should be prohibited ; otherwise other Indian States will commence manufacturing such liquors. Liquor shops should be located at such places and streets that those who wish to have the drink must go there specially for it. They should be out of the frequented way and should not be near the market or near factories and mills.

Some people have such habits that if they have nothing to eat or wear or cover themselves with or to serve themselves with for bedding, they can do without it but they can never do without drink. The Waghris in Ahmedabad remain hungry, do not provide their wives and children with clothings, but always indulge in drink. Hardly their children become one month old when they commence making them lick their fingers dipped in liquor. If their children fall ill, they administer them liquor as medicine. Under no circumstances would they be made to give up drink. Picketing by men of their own community will also be of no avail in their case. It is impossible to wean them from their habits in any way. But if their future generation is educated, they may improve. The same applies in the case of Bhils. They easily distil liquor in the jungle. It is very easy to save mill workers from the drink evil. Taverns should not be allowed in the vicinity of mills and they should be open from nine in the morning to seven in the evening and they should preferably be closed on holidays. In order that mill workers may bathe, wash their clothes, and leave the mill in clean clothes for their homes in the evening, it should be made obligatory by legislation on mill owners to provide for them bathing places in the mill compounds or outside them. By bathing, their fatigue will disappear and after they have put on clean clothes, they will not be tempted to enter taverns. Mill owners should also provide their operatives with dwelling rooms near their mills. If they get tea, coffee, lemon, soda and similar drinks ready available there and can pass their time pleasantly, they will not think of going to take liquor drink.

There should be arrangements for the holding of tournaments of wrestling and other gymnastics during holidays so that they will be induced to give up drink in order to preserve their

---

* Did not attend for oral evidence.

physique for the purpose and win prizes. During holidays magic lantern shows exhibiting the evil consequences of liquor drink should also be arranged for their benefit. Further, they should be given some education in order that they can read books containing pleasant stories and amuse themselves. Schools should also be open for the education of their children.

After the introduction of the Madras system liquor dealers have begun to make great profits and Government do not realise sufficient revenue. Especially, the Bombay City yields very small revenue from this source. The reason of it is that in Bombay City license-holders are themselves the owners of liquor shops and on that account if any other man takes a license, he finds it difficult to get a shop for the sale of liquor. Similarly, in other cities of the Bombay Presidency where licensees are themselves the owners of shops, they (Government) do not realise sufficient revenue and the license-holders make large profits. Furthermore, premises on hire to sell liquor are not obtainable even if handsome rent is offered, as the public feeling is against it, as is evident from the resolutions passed at public meetings in two or four cities in northern India asking the people not to let houses to open shops for the sale of liquor. At such places municipalities provide shops for the sale of liquor. These bodies realise interest from 9 to 12 per cent. on their investments and new license-holders willingly take licenses (as they get shops without any difficulty) and the Government realise good revenue. Corruption in the Excise Department is rampant to such an extent that no other Department, I believe, can equal it in that respect. I have seen in the case of many men employed in this Department that they draw Rs. 40 as pay, but they have a monthly household expenditure of Rs. 100. Despite that they lay by something. Thus it may well be imagined what profits the license-holders selling liquor, toddy, opium, ganja, etc., should be making.

*Toddy.*—The Government make toddy dear day by day by granting licenses at high prices. On that account the consumption of toddy decreases in favour of liquor. A date-tree does not yield so much toddy as will leave a margin of profit to the license-holder after all his expenses, which consists of the tapping fee per tree to be paid to Government, license fee for the shop or hut, the money per tree to be paid to the tree owner, wages of the tapper, rent of the shop and the salary of the shop servant, are covered. Consequently adulteration is made in toddy in varied ways. Pure toddy never produces much intoxication. In order to give intoxicating property to the toddy the juice of the jujube tree is applied to the bottom of *ghadiyas* (pots) tied to the date-trees to receive toddy. It is this juice that produces intoxicating property in the toddy when it melts by the (sun) heat. Secondly, fumigating the *ghadiyas* tied to the date-trees with opium also, gives intoxicating property to the toddy and it acquires bitter and delicious taste. Thirdly, the lowest thick portion of stale toddy which they call " *atho* " if kept in the *ghadiyas*, brings also in it intoxicating property. Lastly, in order to show that toddy is pure and no water is adulterated in it, froth of soap-berry is mixed in it, which makes it appear foamy. The admixture in toddy of the last mentioned kind causes sometimes vomiting which the ignorant take to be beneficial to health. After what is stated above is done, three or four bottles of water per gallon of toddy are poured in it. Over and above this, the shop-keeper adulterates further quantity of water, because, as pointed out above, a tree does not yield so much of toddy as will enable the shop-keeper to conduct his business with any profit after all his working expenses are covered.

If *ghadiyas* without anything being applied therein at the bottom or without their containing any kind of substance as is described previously were tied round the trees to receive toddy after they are tapped, toddy drawn therein gives the sweetest taste. Such pure toddy purifies blood, promotes health and gives coolness to the body. But to get such pure toddy is beyond hope.

Toddy which is sold at present at a dear price is harmful and conduces to increase the consumption of liquor. Taverns should be, as suggested by me above, far off from one another and their number should be lessened but not increased. Formerly in Ahmedabad there were 24 or 25 taverns. At present they are five or six in number ; nevertheless the Government revenue has not decreased. On the contrary, it has increased. But two or three of them are situated at such conspicuous and frequented parts of the city that they attract men to them.

There was consumption of liquor amongst the Parsis 40 or 50 years ago. It had, however, considerably decreased 10 or 12 years ago. But the system which was then in vogue, *viz.*, on marriage occasions to serve liquor at the time when dishes were served, has changed and a bar system has taken its place. Liquor bottles are opened and placed on tables one hour or one hour and a half before the actual time of dinner and those who wish to drink go there and drink to any extent they like without any restraint. On account of this system many gentlemen get overdrunk before the dinner commences. The evil requires to be put down urgently. Articles on the subject appear many times in Parsi owned newspapers. The same evil is prevalent amongst the Europeans especially in military messes where they continue indulging in drink and go on playing cards till 12 or 1 o'clock at night. No foreign liquor shop should be allowed to remain open after 10 p.m., either in Bombay or in the mofussil.

When the Committee visit Ahmedabad and call me before them, I shall place very important evidence before them. But on account of the hot climate of this city sittings may kindly be held in the morning.

## KARACHI WITNESSES.

### No. 104

### REPLIES OF THE EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SHIKARPUR.

*Present. :*

1. I. H. Taunton, Esq., I.C.S.
2. Mr. Murlidhar, President, Municipality.
3. Mr. Najmuddin, City Magistrate.
4. Mr. Mubarakali Khan, City Police Inspector.
5. Seth Tirithdas Techchand, Municipal Councillor.
6. Mian Ali Bakhsh Muhammad Hussein, Vice-President, Municipality, and M.L.A.
7. Seth Madhawdas Talrejo, Zamindar and Banker.

*Our opinions are the result of general experience.*

2. The policy itself is good but it has not had the effect of reducing intemperance.

3. and 4. (*i*) Total prohibition is necessary, because

(*a*) Government measures have not prevented intemperance.

(*b*) Alcohol is injurious to health, and inducive to crime, extravagance and insanity. It is bad for heredity and home life is ruined. Self-respect is lessened and degeneracy becomes general.

(*ii*) The example of America shows that it is a practical measure, even though success may come gradually.

(*iii*) By legislation which should prohibit—

(*a*) Sale.

(*b*) Manufacture.

(*c*) Import, except for medicinal purposes.

5. (*a*) This can be made an offence.

(*b*) It is hoped that the majority of Indian States will follow the example of British territory and enforce prohibition ; public opinion in Indian States can be stimulated with this object. Import must be prevented from those States which do not agree, and from Portuguese territory.

(*c*) Discontent will no doubt arise but only among a minority and this too will disappear in time. As drink is an evil we should not consider the discontent of those who are compelled to abandon it. People who go to jail are compelled to abandon drink, etc., and these classes can do likewise.

(*d*) While admitting the force of this objection, we consider that it is of minor importance in relation to the whole subject and by the creation of a sound public opinion on this question preventive establishment will ultimately become almost unnecessary.

(*e*) All intoxicants and drugs should be prohibited.

6. We strongly support it.

7. Propaganda will be necessary side by side with legislation.

8. Yes.

9. and 10. Nothing less than total prohibition is effective.

11. Failing total prohibition, we strongly recommend local option. A referendum can be taken in any municipal or local board district on the basis of the present legislative council electoral rolls.

12. Yes, local bodies established under the law. Alternatively, a special Excise committee may be established for each area, four-fifths elected and one-fifth nominated. Government have admitted that considerations of revenue are subordinate to public welfare, and they should be therefore prepared for some sacrifice. Moreover the increased prosperity and health arising from general temperance will finally more than compensate for temporary loss of revenue. We do not think the local bodies should be called on for any contribution to general revenues.

13. They have answered questions put to them from time to time, but having no authority of their own, they could do nothing else. If excise control is handed over to local bodies the Advisory Committees will automatically become superfluous, unless they are, in the alternative, converted into excise committees with powers as suggested above (no. 12).

14. Yes, emphatically.

15. (*a*) Reduction of expenses of administration.

(*b*) Government grants-in-aid (including building grants) for education, hospitals, etc., may be reduced to one-third and finally abolished. The public will willingly pay additional rates imposed under such heads as they see the results immediately and realise their benefit.

(*c*) A prohibition tax should be imposed.

16. These should be totally prohibited.

17. It appears to be common among Pathans and to some extent among the poor of all classes, for medicinal purposes ; no harmful results are known to us to have occurred.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. TAUNTON on behalf of the Excise Advisory Committee, Shikarpur, replied to the President :—" I am Assistant Collector of Shikarpur. The replies of the Excise Advisory Committee, Shikarpur, are the opinion of the majority of that committee. They certainly do not reflect my opinion. Mr. Murlidhar practically dominated the committee. Only Mr. Mian Ali Baksh and myself voted against him. The City Police Inspector and the City Magistrate had no definite opinions to give.

" I do not think as far as I am personally concerned, that total prohibition will lead to the actual cessation of drink. We have already got to cope with a great deal of illicit distillation and smuggling from neighbouring States, and if prohibition is not extended to foreign liquor, as I suppose, is the intention, the prohibition of country liquor would mean a tremendous increase in the consumption of foreign liquor—not only imported, but also Indian made, *e.g.*, brandy from Baroda which is very injurious. Indian States may fall in with the policy adopted in British States, but they are sure to protest. The introduction of a system of shopless belts between States and British territory would not help to stop smuggling, because the smuggling that goes on at present is independent of shops. Liquor is brought and sold by Baluchis in secret places outside the towns. I admit that if prohibition is introduced any liquor that is found may be easily spotted as illicit liquor, and in that way there will be a check on smuggling and illicit distillation.

" I have known the working of advisory committees for the last seven years. There are definite functions assigned to the advisory committees. Their function is to advise the revenue authorities about the location of shops and closing of shops. Their opinions carry considerable weight, because hitherto they have always been very reasonable. No doubt on the question of closing shops, their opinions are liable to be overruled by the Collector. This is probably because he receives petitions from inhabitants of the neighbourhood protesting against the closing though it is possible that these petitions may have been prompted by the licensees. I have no objection to giving more powers to the advisory committees, but I think some safeguards are necessary. I have no objection to giving powers to licensing boards subject to the approval of the Collector, and I have no objection either to making it obligatory on the Collector to carry out the decisions of the majority of the committee except in such cases where he thinks that such decision has been perverse, in which case he should refer the matter to the Minister recording his opinions on such decisions.

" I have no objection to leaving the question of closing shops to a referendum of the people of the locality, but I think that there should be a substantial majority in favour of the closure before a shop can be closed, say 70 or 75 per cent. majority.

" I admit that the presence of a shop in a neighbourhood offers temptation to non-drinkers. I would not favour the system of supplying drink only to people who register themselves and take out coupons. There would be difficulty of having the necessary machinery for it, and besides it would be unjustifiable interference with the liberty of the public. No modern Government anywhere does that kind of thing.

" In Shikarpur nearly all drink, the Mussalmans as well as Hindus. The necessity of taking out tickets will not deter the majority of drinkers from taking to drink so far as Shikarpur is concerned. It would affect only about five per cent. Moreover you cannot prevent a man from taking out a coupon. Before refusing him coupons, how are you going to prove that the man had no drink before ? If a man is willing to go to a shop, he would be willing to take out coupons."

To Dr. Patil :—" If you are going to limit the quantity of drink allowed for a man, there is no harm in allowing him to drink it in the shop ; but I have no objection to the abolition of on licenses.

" I am opposed to Government employing its own servants to sell liquor. I am opposed to State interference in such matters. These things are done more efficiently by contractors than by Government departments.

" I have no objection to raising the age limit for drinkers to 18."

To Mr. Mehta :—" There is much of illicit distillation and smuggling going on in Shikarpur district, but we have been able to get very few convictions. The men carrying on this trade are very violent and the police and the excise officials are afraid of them, and people do not come forward to give evidence against them.

" The constitution of the advisory committees is at present left to the Collector. He asks the municipality to elect one representative, the bench of honorary magistrates one, the Panchayat one, and the others are appointed by the Commissioner on the Collector's recommendation. I feel that there would be no harm in extending election to these advisory committees, but the presence of the City Magistrate and the Police Inspector in the committee would be a help to them. I have no objection to giving to local bodies or municipalities the power of licensing or closing shops, subject to the safeguards aforesaid.

" I do not know whether the fixing of an age for country liquor will have the effect of mellowing it, but if it has that effect I have no objection to fixing such age.

" I admit that where there are no shops, there is very little liquor drunk. "

To Dr. Patil :—" People drink more in summer than in winter. "

To Mr. Mehta :—" I have had no experience of toddy in Sind. You may introduce toddy if it has the effect of reducing the consumption of foreign liquor, but toddy also is injurious. I do not think that toddy is less injurious than country liquor. "

*Statement handed over by Mr. Taunton showing the consumption of country liquor in gallons in terms of London Proof in the Sukkur District.*

| Years. | Shikarpur Town. | | Sukkur Town. | | Rural areas. | | Total for the district. | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Population. | Consumption. | Population. | Consumption. | Population. | Consumption. | Population. | Consumption. | |
| 1907-08 .. | 49,491 | 8,373 | 30,195 | 12,264 | 443,659 | 7,416 | 523,345 | 28,053 | |
| 1908-09 .. | 49,491 | 6,937 | 30,195 | 11,427 | 443,659 | 8,033 | 523,345 | 26,397 | |
| 1909-10 .. | 49,491 | 6,945 | 30,195 | 11,488 | 443,659 | 8,422 | 523,345 | 26,855 | |
| 1910-11 .. | 53,946 | 6,571 | 35,301 | 10,997 | 484,873 | 7,699 | 574,120 | 25,267 | |
| 1911-12 .. | 53,944 | 6,722 | 35,294 | 11,578 | 484,675 | 7,529 | 573,913 | 25,829 | |
| 1912-13 .. | 53,944 | 5,364 | 35,294 | 9,050 | 484,675 | 5,709 | 573,913 | 20,123 | Out of this period of last 10 years figures of consumption for the year 1913-14 are not available. |
| 1913-14 .. | 53,944 | .. | 35,294 | .. | 484,675 | .. | 573,913 | .. | |
| 1914-15 .. | 53,944 | 5,474 | 35,294 | 8,948 | 484,675 | 5,839 | 573,913 | 20,261 | |
| 1915-16 .. | 53,944 | 6,483 | 35,294 | 9,915 | 484,675 | 7,628 | 573,913 | 24,026 | |
| 1916-17 .. | 53,944 | 5,579 | 35,294 | 8,907 | 484,675 | 5,896 | 573,913 | 20,382 | |
| 1917-18 .. | 53,944 | 4,816 | 35,294 | 8,538 | 484,675 | 5,607 | 573,913 | 18,961 | |
| 1918-19 .. | 53,944 | 5,663 | 35,294 | 9,403 | 484,675 | 5,855 | 573,913 | 20,921 | |
| 1919-20 .. | 53,944 | 5,689 | 35,294 | 11,336 | 484,675 | 6,413 | 573,913 | 23,438 | |
| 1920-21 .. | 55,041 | 6,002 | 41,525 | 11,965 | 413,836 | 6,853 | 510,402 | 24,820 | |
| 1921-22 .. | 55,041 | 3,545 | 41,525 | 9,023 | 413,836 | 4,049 | 510,402 | 16,617 | |

No. 105.

REPLIES OF MR. METHARAM ISSARSING, SECRETARY, REFORM ASSOCIATION, AND MEMBER, EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, LARKHANA.

1. I have been a teacher the most part of my life and belong to an association that is working for the last 24 years in the social cause, the chief items of the activities of which are temperance and female education.

2. (*a*) The present policy of Government is not likely to be of much use. It contains provision for moderate drinkers while it cannot effectively check the excess, nor is the policy so rigid as would not leave any temptation for even a person of temperate habits. Liquor is a commodity or rather a sort of poison that creates an insidious craving for an increased indulgence therein, if only once a man resorts to it. It is therefore that all the Indian religions prohibit its use. If Government in right earnest desire to minimize its consumption, it must put all possible restrictions on its use as it would in respect of any other poison, irrespective of all considerations of revenue. It is always a bad economy to realize revenue from intoxicants. Any other form of taxation in lieu of such an immoral one would be readily welcomed.

(*b*) The policy as it even stands has been put in practice so half-heartedly that the consumption of liquor has palpably increased. It has only gone further and further to affect the pockets of the drinkers, thereby daily adding to their poverty.

3. I would strongly advocate a radical change in the excise policy on the lines mentioned in my answer no. 2 (*a*) with a view to stop the evil of drink altogether.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition on the following grounds. It can be a practical measure if it is backed by legislation :—

(*i*) Economy :—The average income of an Indian comes to 5 pice a day and it cannot be sufficient even for their necessaries of life, much less can such little income be used for the dangerous drink.

(*ii*) Health :—Intoxicants cause a wreckage in bodily system and very much impair the use of physical energy as well as working power and the mental capacity. The use of liquor is responsible for many a premature death.

(*iii*) Religion :—All Indian religions prohibit the use of intoxicants and the present system has afforded a great temptation to break the salutary injunctions of religions.

5. Being in favour of total prohibition I would say :—

(*a*) People in general are too busy to resort to any illicit means on a large scale. However, as in America the vigilance of law would put an effective check thereon.

(*b*) It is for Government to meet the situation and people would be all prepared to co-operate in this matter.

(*c*) There is no such custom amongst the higher classes of people. The custom has grown only in some lower classes and if serious attempts are made to wean them from this pernicious habit, it is believed they would be not so callous that they would not listen to or understand the endeavours likely to promote their own interests so vitally.

(*d*) One is likely to see spectres in every bush, but in this instance if the Government and the people co-operate to drive away this demon of drink once for all the contemplated danger will be greatly minimized.

(*e*) It can be met with by the application of the same measure against other intoxicating drugs as in the case of liquor.

6. I quite concur in this view.

7. Every other means available for checking this evil may be welcome but none can be properly effective without being backed by a strict legislative prohibition. Side by side, preaching, introduction of temperance lessons in school books and encouraging temperance societies with funds, etc., be resorted to on an extensive scale.

8. The principle of prohibition be applied to all sorts of liquor distilled or fermented, and even toddy and shindy ; the latter have only added to the misery of the poor.

9. I do not believe in half measures. It is only when we place total prohibition in view that we can succeed in fast reducing the consumption. All steps would otherwise go to dragging the matter by very slow degrees to a weary length. As for controlling the consumption, the methods mentioned in question no. 10 would for the present do well to achieve the object.

10. I would only add that liquor be sold only in bottles and half bottles like foreign liquor at a prohibitive price. The sale should be at only one place in each area outside the town limits on fixed days and for fixed hours. The days should be as limited and hours as few as possible. In no case should liquor be sold on holidays.

11. I am not in favour of local option for fear of its being exploited.

12. I favour the investing of local bodies with the small powers, but would not like to saddle them with the responsibility of making good the loss if any in revenue on the ground

that the Excise policy as a whole will be chalked out by Government only whose function alone it is to recoup the resources.

13. The present excise committees do not serve a substantially useful purpose as the vetoing power of the Collector in many cases has marred the utility of the very existence of such committees. Another drawback in their constitution is that many of the members that are put on them do generally themselves drink.

14. Yes, it does. It has also a tremendous effect on the output of work. With the increase of sobriety people would grow more mindful of their work, look to their domestic affairs and would give up every indifference and negligence that has ruined many a family at the present moment.

15. My view is that if India is fortunate enough to escape entirely from the baneful effects of intoxicants, people would not be reluctant to bear the burden of the new taxation, if wisely imposed and distributed on each head of population on a small scale; though I am strongly of opinion that no need would arise even for such taxation after a country has become dry. The natural sequence of sobriety would be manyfold blessings and not any calamities. In these days of general awakening it causes no small amount of heart-burning to the people to learn that income derived from evil resources be spent on such sacred items as education, etc.

16. I learn that intoxicants such as opium and hemp, etc., are no longer allowed to be sold in the Presidency proper and I would strongly suggest that the same should be done here in Sind also.

17. The custom is nearly dying as far as the higher classes are concerned. The lower classes only are addicted to the evil. To avoid proper nursing and to silence the impatient and hungry baby they resort to this cheap nostrum, which in the long run undermines the health of little ones and consequently proves fatal. Thus this drug (opium, etc.) is responsible for a higher rate of deaths among the children.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. METHARAM ISSARSING replied to the President :—" I am a member of the Excise Advisory Committee, Larkana. The Collector calls meetings at his pleasure and no definite duties are prescribed for the Advisory Committee. The constitution of the Larkana committee is : 2 members elected by the municipality, 1 by the Temperance Association, 1 Honorary Magistrate and 3 officials. I have not attended the meetings of the committee for the last ten months, as I am a Non-co-operator, but during the last two years or so that I worked as a member, three meetings were held. The opinion of the majority was accepted at all times. I would have an elected majority of two-thirds in the Advisory Committee. I have no objection to the Collector sending the majority decision, with his opinion, to the Minister for orders, in those cases where he feels that the decision is perverse; but ordinarily the majority decision should prevail. The Collector should not have the power of absolute veto that he possesses at present. I would like to have the members elected by the municipality, the district local board and the temperance and other associations. The Reform Associations, which work for public welfare, may also be represented on the Advisory Committee.

" The only instance in which the Collector's power was exercised wrongly, in my opinion, was on the question of the retail sale of beer. A man applied for license to sell beer retail. In the first year, the question was referred to the committee and the committee refused to recommend a license. In the second year, the man applied for the license and the Collector was disposed to decide the question without reference to the committee, and only when he was reminded of a former decision by the Advisory Committee that he referred the matter to the committee. The committee refused again. The same thing happened the next year. The fourth year, I hear that the man has applied again and is about to succeed. I feel that once the Advisory Committee has decided on such matters, their decision should be given effect to, and they should not be consulted on the same matter year after year.

" I have no experience of other municipalities, but so far as the Larkana Municipality is concerned, as it is constituted at present the power of local option ought not to be given to it, but to the advisory committee, as there are few members on it who are in right earnest on the question of temperance. Other better municipalities, such as Karachi and Hyderabad, may be given that power.

" It is perhaps much better to leave the question to be decided by a referendum to the people. In Larkana the women should not have the power of voting, but in other places, where they are sufficiently enlightened, it may be given.

" In Sind the Granth Saheb is taken as the religious authority by the Hindus, and the Granth Saheb prohibits drink.

" Consumption of foreign liquor is on the increase. Consumption of country liquor has gone on increasing for the last ten years; but when the picketing movement was started, there was an appreciable reduction.

" I took some part in the picketing movement, and I know that the Excise regulations were contravened in many instances. I have seen liquor being served to minors; it was sold in larger quantities than authorized; it was sold before and after the fixed hours. We brought it unofficially to the notice of the authorities, but no action was taken.

" It would not be unjust to tax liquor-drinking persons in order to make up any deficit in the revenue that may have to be faced as a result of prohibition, as they would consider it a grievance, and the country when it once becomes dry, would not need so much revenue."

To Dr. Patil.—" Liquor should be sold only in 4 and 8 dram bottles, as poor people like Mochis, etc., are not in a osition to find sufficient money to purchase a larger quantity. They should not be allowed to take it home.

"Liquor shops should be closed for two or three days in a week, and on other days they should be kept open only for two or three hours in the afternoon.

" Persons below 18 years of age should not be served liquor.

"Total prohibition should be introduced in as short a period as possible, say, five years."

To Mr. Mehta :—" Whenever a meeting of the advisory committee was called, the question of deciding the number of shops in my city was on the agenda, but the meetings were called, at times, after the auctioning of the shops.

" The shop-keepers add water to the liquor on account of the auction system and that leads to greater consumption.

"It is possible to picket all the year round. Picketing is no doubt using some sort of moral force, and the result will be that there will be gradual reduction in the number of drunkards. I have myself been on the picketing and I can say that it was quite peaceful, there being no disturbance at all.

"In Larkana we have approached the caste panchayats of the lower classes, and have been successful to some extent in reducing consumption.

" In Larkana I think Government indirectly influence some of the members of the Municipality to vote against the closing of shops.

" I do not think that people will take to foreign liquor if country liquor shops are closed at once and foreign liquor shops are allowed to continue as at present.

"Since replying to Mr. Patil, I think there can be no serious objection to allowing the man to take the half or full bottle home.

" Temperance propaganda, backed up by legislation, would bring about the desired results much quicker and education would make it easier."

To the President :—"I correct myself and say that picketing was from March to October 1921."

To Mr. Mehta :—" I have no idea about toddy, but opium is used by some people, and it should be stopped."

*Statement I handed over by Mr. Metharam Issarsing, showing the population of Larkana municipal limits from 1901 to 1922.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Census of 1901 | | 14,543 |
| Population on 31st December | 1901 | 14,465 |
| Do. | 1902 | 14,171 |
| Do. | 1903 | 13,967 |
| Do. | 1904 | 14,052 |
| Do. | 1905 | 14,122 |
| Do. | 1906 | 13,977 |
| Do. | 1907 | 13,799 |
| Do. | 1908 | 13,898 |
| Do. | 1909 | 13,893 |
| Do. | 1910 | 13,919 |
| Do. | 1911 | 16,287 |
| Census of 1911 | | 16,097 |
| Population on 31st December | 1912 | 16,120 |
| Do. | 1913 | 15,900 |
| Do. | 1914 | 15,905 |
| Do. | 1915 | 15,948 |
| Do. | 1916 | 15,897 |
| Do. | 1917 | 15,418 |
| Do. | 1918 | 14,376 |
| Do. | 1919 | 14,319 |
| Do. | 1920 | 14,355 |
| Census of 1921 | | 17,723 |
| Population on 31st December | 1921 | 17,841 |
| Do. | 1922 | 17,904 |

*Statement II handed over by Mr. Metharam Issarsing, showing consumption of liquor in talukas.*

| | Sehwan. | | Dadu. | | Johi. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | G. | D. | G. | D. | G. | D. |
| 1916-17 .. .. .. | .. | | 1,644 | 25 | .. | |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. | 1,059 | 45 | 1,322 | 46 | .. | |
| 1918-19 .. .. .. | 1,625 | 6 | 1,858 | 0 | .. | |
| 1919-20 .. .. .. | 2,774 | 4 | 2,617 | 8 | 1,071 | 0 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. | 2,329 | 10 | 2,714 | 1 | 839 | 24 |
| 1921-22 .. .. .. | 1,926 | 46 | 1,070 | 0 | 391 | 36 |
| 1922-23 .. . .. | 1,169 | 6 | 698 | 26 | 291 | 10 |

## No. 106.

### Replies of Mr. ABDUL HAMID KHUDADAD KHAN, M.L.A., Representative of Honorary Magistrates, Sukkur, Sind.

1. I am a Jagirdar, a Municipal Councillor and an Honorary Magistrate. As a citizen in above capacities I have had ample opportunities of forming an opinion on the subject.

2. The policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001, dated 7th September 1905, was sound and well-intentioned, but it has failed to achieve in practice the desired effect of either minimising temptation or discouraging excess in the use of alcoholic liquors for more than one reason, chief of which may be said to be :—

(1) Indifference of public and society at large to the matter hitherto ;

(2) Vastness of communities, some of which indulge in taking liquor even as a social necessity or binding ;

(3) Want of adequate number of Temperance Societies and improvement measures ;

(4) Increased earning power or cost of labour with the natural consequence that it has been within easier reach of lower class of people to resort to drinking ; and

(5) Absence of strict and periodical examination with a view to sparse location of liquor shops or the lessening of consumption of liquor in particular communities or localities.

Inspite of the raised duties or restricted supplies of liquor and other preventive measures being taken in the matter, one can read in the increased tendency for illicit production of liquor, the true condition of the people and especially of many of the lower communities and castes. It may be said also that many sons of high class people have fallen into excess by the facility afforded by the existence of more liquor shops in a particular village or locality, than would be desirable with due regard to common interests.

3. Considering the circumstances standing to the disadvantage as stated in reply 2 above and in view of the public opinion having interested itself in the matter now more seriously than hitherto, it seems desirable that Government should improve upon the policy in the sense that "prevention is better than cure" in the interests of the larger part of the lower class of people in the country. I am inclined to feel that the Temperance Societies as at present formed and working, are only few and quite limited in their field of action. It is therefore difficult to secure a uniform improvement without disturbing the present conditions greatly. The effective measures to be taken by the Government seem to be :—

(1) Reducing importation of foreign liquors.

(2) Reducing preparation of country liquor.

(3) High import duty on foreign liquor and high royalty for country liquor.

(4) Reducing the number of shops.

(5) Reducing the supply of liquor to the shops.

(6) Prescribing the age limit of consumers.

(7) Very heavy penalties for illicit production or smuggling of liquor.

4. Total prohibition would be impracticable. Allowance has to be made for medicinal use as well as for such people who have a habit or no objection to take it in moderation. In fact for both these purposes, generally foreign liquor is used. As to the country-made liquors, in the present time, there is a general belief that they are the most dangerous, being both cheap and largely available in retail quantities, and thus doing a serious bodily as well as moral hurt.

5. I favour partial prohibition ; the objections stated are not such as could not be remedied, or that these drawbacks in any way should hamper the whole scheme of improvement so vital to the well-being of the country and its economic future.

(*a*) and (*b*) Very drastic punishment, in the shape of fine and imprisonment for all sorts of illicit preparation and smuggling of liquor, will eventually eradicate the existing evil.

(*c*) It is doubtful, in the present enlightened era, if any community will consider it its religious duty to ask or press for more liquor being supplied or rationed in the country or their particular locality.

(*d*) All illicit distillation and illegal exactions on the part of preventive establishments must be met with exemplary punishments. Rewards should be offered for exposing such practices.

(*e*) With restrictions and reductions as above in the matter of liquors and all other intoxicants, it would, in the long run, be possible to do a real good to the country with everlasting benefit to the state as well.

6. I have already stated that total prohibition will be impossible of attainment in a large country like India, with native states abounding in it. As to reductions and restrictions they are sure to produce a healthy and moral effect as time goes on.

7. I am not in favour of aiming at total prohibition.

8. I am in favour of partial prohibition or reduction, as explained in reply 9 below, and would not object to shindi or toddy being similarly dealt with.

9. I suggest reduction of all liquors to one-fifth of the present quantity—this limit to be reached at the end of four years by reducing one-fifth every year. As the quantities to be imported or manufactured locally are reduced, so should there be a slight improvement in raising the import and royalty fees. Foreign liquor may have a preference over country made liquor in this respect, for it is the latter kind of alcohol which is used and complained of the most. The reduction in revenues will be easy of being sustained gradually and the yearly deficit may not figure so large when one considers the heavy levy of fines, royalty, import duty and license fees on the receipt side.

10. The measures suggested for controlling consumption are good enough, except (*e*) and (*k*), *i.e.*, reduction of strength of liquor and prohibition of removal of liquor from shops. The former will tend to increase the want and drinking capacity of people, whereas the latter will promote notoriety, stealing and exactions by petty officials without doing much towards the real object. The shops will be congested and the habit will get strength by collecting moderate as well as heavy drinkers in one place.

11. I cannot very well follow the principle of local option. It is difficult to obtain a unanimous verdict, when there are different communities and different religious views on the subject. It may be called the popular local opinion, which, however, will be exercised by a majority. Perhaps in a place where there were more Sikhs or Bhils, the voice of an orthodox party of Hindus or Moslems would not avail, and *vice versa*. What is desirable, in my humble opinion, is a uniform and gradual preventive scheme and this cannot be handled in different places by different local views. The best way to deal with this whole important question is to classify different parts or communities of the country, ascertain the average extent of alcoholic use and reduce their rationing gradually to an extent compatible with general health, morality and public opinion.

12. I am, under above observations, not in favour of investing local bodies with determining powers, unless they work as carriers of Governments' gradual policy in the matter. In such a case, no burden of raising the part of revenues to be sacrificed should fall upon them. The number of foreign liquor shops may be very limited, whereas country liquor shops may still be fewer in number, say, 1 per 10,000 population, with such a restricted quantity of liquor as may be scrupulously recommended by a medical board on a gradual 5-year scale. By investing powers in local bodies, new taxation will be levied, which may also fall on such poorer people as may also not be using liquor at all. By raising the cost of the liquor and reducing its quantity, the rich only will have to pay and the common man will have less inducement to go much astray too.

13. The existing Advisory Committee's work is not so wide as to become useful in practice. They should be well representative on the subject in question. Perhaps Temperance Societies, if aided by Government, would be better suited to effect improvement. Some industrial means may be opened for habitual drinkers and lectures and screen shows against evil effects of all intoxicants started by local societies.

14. Evil of drink, in an Indian home, is truly "the mother of all evils" and so its evil effects cannot be underestimated.

15. The question of revenues should not weigh with the moral, physical and economic good. However, there cannot be an overwhelming deficit in revenues after all as explained in my brief reply to question 9 above.

16. I can offer same remarks in the matter of prohibiting or controlling the use of opium and hemp drugs as in the case of liquors.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent among most of the natives of India. Formerly every home indulged in it, but with the spread of education higher societies have given up the practice. Poorer mothers still administer opium to infants to send them to sleep while they attend to their own work. This has a bad effect on the health of children and to a degree accounts for early infant mortality in the lower classes, who have poor food and dirty dwellings in addition.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KHUDADAD KHAN replied to the President :—"I am a member of the Advisory Committee, Sukkur, elected by the 12 honorary magistrates of that place.

"I consider that a dram or two is drinking in moderation. A register of moderate drinkers should be maintained, and liquor should be supplied to people also on the production of a medical certificate. To all others the shops should be closed. This will not, in my opinion, lead to discontent.

"The municipalities should be given the power of ascertaining the views of the people as regards local option by means of a referendum, both men and women having the right to vote, the decision to take effect in the case of a two-thirds majority.

"The advisory committee at Sukkur is consulted whenever there is any business to dispose of, and all reasonable suggestions of the committee are accepted. It now consists of 6 elected and 3 nominated official members. From a Government Resolution in the Collector's office, I find that the duties of the advisory committee consist of advising as regards the maximum and minimum number of shops to be maintained, reduction and location of shops, opening and closing of shops, opening temporary shops on fair days, and opening new shops in new localities. No instructions were issued to the members when first appointed as to their duties. If the advisory committee by a majority decides that a shop should be closed, it is closed. In 1921 we closed three shops in that way and in 1922 two more shops were closed, and we have now only six shops remaining. This has been the case because the people do not want shops, and also on account of the interest which the members take.

"I modify my statement in paragraph 12 and now say that local authorities are the only proper persons to carry out the policy of reducing shops, etc. When I made my statement I did not quite realise what the principle of local option was."

To Dr. Patil:—"Persons below 18 years of age should not be served liquor. Any infringement of the regulations should be severely punished, and the detecters should be suitably rewarded.

"Total prohibition might be introduced gradually in the course of 5 to 10 years.

"I am in favour of the coupon system. Temperance associations should be subsidised by Government.

"Reduction of shops in a locality does not affect consumption to a large extent, but the temptation is reduced.

"Unless the figures of consumption of foreign liquor are available, the reduction in country liquor consumption cannot be taken as a proper guide, and therefore side by side with the closing of country liquor shops, there ought to be a corresponding reduction in foreign liquor shops.

"I think country liquor is dangerous, because it easily intoxicates a man.

"The coupon system may lead to bribery and corruption, but this could be minimised by having non-transferable coupons.

"I do not think the members of advisory committees are in any way influenced by Government. In many cases, when the official members wanted the removal of a shop, the non-officials did not support them.

"I have no personal knowledge of toddy, but I am told it is a cooling drink.

"The lower classes among the Mahomedans take more of *bhang* and opium, but among the educated, they drink foreign liquor for fashion. In Sukkur the use of *bhang* and *charas* is the same as it was before; but I consider them to be harmless, and to some extent cooling in the hot weather.

"Drinking at home is better than drinking outside.

"I would advocate the closing of retail bars."

To the President:—"If the coupons are to be taken from ward committees of the communities to which the parties belong, it is unlikely that a person who is not a drunkard will take coupons for the purpose of selling them and getting money out of them."

No. 107.

REPLIES OF Mr. DIPCHAND T. OJAH, M.L.C., KARACHI.

1. Pleader—As a teetotaler I have had very few opportunities of forming an opinion on the questions put.

2. The policy laid down by Government is good and will be efficacious. It will put in course of time a desirable effective check on intemperance.

3. I am not in a position to say what changes should be made in that policy and what should be done to improve upon it as I do not drink.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition.

5. No answer necessary having regard to my answer to question no. 4. It will be difficult to meet all the objections raised in this question. It will also be difficult and not beneficial to the poor class of people if illicit production is totally stopped.

6. It is difficult to say just now what effect the total prohibition will have on the next generation. It will have some influence on the next generation if prohibition is introduced gradually. It will act as a restriction on drinking habits.

7. I believe that prohibitive legislation will be the only means.

8. If prohibition is introduced it must apply to all liquors.

9. The means to be applied are mentioned in queston no. 10.

10. In my opinion the means suggested are the only ones which commend themselves to me for the present.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. In my opinion all the different communities of places should have their voice in the selection of sites for shops or in the opening of shops or the quantity for consumption in a particular place.

12. I am in favour of investing municipalities of large towns and cities with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. I am not in favour of making them responsible for raising any part of the revenue. They may if they choose find out means for the sacrifice made by them. As regards local boards such a power should be sparingly invested.

13. I have no experience of the work of the existing Advisory Committees.

14. Yes.

15. I cannot.

16. I have none.

17. In Sind this custom is not greatly prevalent. Opium in very very small quantities is administered by mothers to their children in order to keep them asleep at night and not to cry or weep much. I don't think the custom has to do much with the death rate among children unless opium is given in large quantities to bring about death.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. OJAH replied to the President :—" I was Vice-President of the Karachi Municipality and acting President for some time. I am a practising pleader for the last 21 years.

" I would give the power of deciding local option to a small committee representative of all the important communities resident in the city. When the question of deciding the opening or closing of a shop in a particular area of the city has to be decided, the committee may collect the opinion of the people inhabiting that locality by means of a referendum. The committee should be advisory and should be wholly non-official and elected. I would not allow Government interference in the composition of the committee."

*Q.* Will you not elect the committee on the same basis as the municipality ? *A.* The matter should be left to the leaders of the different communities.

*Q.* Why do you want representation by communities ? On that advisory committee the members will be elected by the whole city, and the option of any particular locality will be decided by a referendum. *A.* I am not against that idea also. In case it does not appeal to the general public, I would have the committee elected by different communities.

" I do consider that the presence of shops in a locality is a great temptation to non-drinkers in that locality. I am in favour of introducing prohibition gradually by means of rationing liquor to individuals and by reduction of the number of shops each year. I would agree to a programme of total prohibition within ten or fifteen years. When I stated in my written evidence that I was not in favour of total prohibition, I meant that I was not in favour of total prohibition to be introduced immediately. I do want prohibition, if applied, to be applied to foreign liquor also.

" I would like to give final power to municipalities in the matter of closing and opening shops, and the advisory committees should make recommendations to them. I cannot give any suggestions with regard to rural areas, as I have no experience of them. "

To Mr. Mehta :—" I am in favour of giving power to municipalities in the matter of local option both as regards foreign liquor and country liquor. The municipalities should have power to decide how many shops should be opened and where, what shall be the maximum consumption and also what kind of liquor should be sold.

" If a system of rationing liquor to individuals is adopted, I would not like the municipalities to keep a department to work that system unless Government transfer a portion of the revenue to the muncipalities. Government should work the system.

" I do feel strongly that prohibition should be the goal of the Indian Government. It should not be adopted at once, but gradually.

" I have stated. ' It will also be difficult and not beneficial to the poor class of people if illicit production is totally stopped. ' My idea was that until total prohibition comes into force, in the course of the application of gradual prohibition the charges for liquor might become high and thus the poorer class of people will not feel it beneficial to them.

" Instead of risking the danger of having no prohibition, I would meet any likely opposition on the part of Europeans in India by exempting them from the prohibition law. It should be possible to force licensees to restrict their sales to Europeans by imposing penalties on defaulters.

" In the matter of rationing liquor to individual drinkers, I would have ward committees to exercise that power in preference to communal committees.

" If total prohibition is decided on as the goal, I would have the advisory committees composed of teetotalers entirely. On the advisory committee I would be in favour of giving representation to temperance associations, and associations like the Social Service League. I would be willing to give representation to drinking classes, so that their views also may be heard.

" I am against Government taking up picketing by putting the department into the hands of honorary magistrates. If Government want to help picketing, they can do so by putting the work in charge of respectable citizens. Picketing should be carried on by persuasive, not abusive, language. I am against revenue officers or excise officers being entrusted with the task of the temperance propaganda. I am not in favour of Government interference at all in the matter of this propaganda.

" If toddy is comparatively less intoxicating than liquor, I agree that it may be encoura ged in preference to liquor. "

To Dr. Patil :—" If adulterated and fermented toddy is as harmful or more harmful than liquor, then I would confine the sale to fresh and unadulterated toddy. I am in favour of closing shops before sunset ; also on holidays and pay days. Shops should not be located on public roads or near temples and mosques or in localities where respectable citizens live.

" The age limit for drinkers should be 25 years.

" Temperance work may be encouraged by subsidising temperance associations, and by teaching temperance in schools.

" As regards the giving of opium to children I know that it is given in the form of *bal golis* to children, but such *golis* are made of opium and other medicines which counteract the action of opium, and are therefore not harmful. "

To Mr. Mehta :—" If opium is given without any counteracting medicine, I agree that it is harmful. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I was Vice-President of the temperance association 20 years ago, but our propaganda had little effect. In Karachi there is now more drinking than there was 20 years ago.

" Regular instruction should be given to boys in all classes about the evil effects of drink ; a few lessons here and there will not be of much use.

" In cities the liquor shops should be reduced at the rate of 10 per cent. every year. I cannot express any opinion about the rural areas. Rationing should go hand in hand with the reduction of shops, but I cannot say what quantity should be reduced every year.

" I am not in favour of investing local boards with the power of local option, as I am afraid of favouritism.

" In order to make up the loss of excise revenue, there should be retrenchment in Government expenditure ; even the Legislative Council may be done away with. "

To Mr. Mehta :—" As regards the location of shops, if they are to be closed after sunset, there should be no objection to their being in prominent places. "

No. 108.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. K. PUNNAIAH,* Editor of the "*Sind Observer*," replied to the President :—"All classes of people drink in Karachi. The educated classes take foreign liquor. Some of them take Khairpur wines for a change.

"I am in favour of total prohibition, to be carried out within 10 or 15 or 20 years, but once Government lays down the policy, it should be very strictly followed.

"At the time the Congress was carrying on its propaganda the feeling among the people was that if Government co-operated with the temperance workers, it would have gone a long away towards eradicating the evil. So far as Karachi is concerned a small proportion of the pickets, about 5 or 10 per cent. of them, may have been to blame, but the rest of them were doing their work peacefully. At times the police came into collision with them through sheer malice.

"When once drinking is recognised as an evil, it must somehow or other be stopped. Just as a man's liberty is restricted by Government in other directions, so also he should not be allowed to drink liquor, because unlike some other evils, *e.g.*, prostitution, this is an evil of enormous magnitude.

"The general opinion among the people is that it should be stopped, although some of them may not have the moral force to stop drinking themselves. I do not think that propaganda will be of much use.

"I would advocate a district being taken as the unit; the reduction of shops should start in areas where consumption is the largest. Government must be prepared to face any discontent that may be created thereby.

"To make up for the loss of excise revenue, Government should find out the ways and means. Some additional duty may be imposed on sugar and jaggery and tobacco, and *bidis* and betel leaf shops. A tax on building sites will not be unjust if it falls on people who drink; if not, in the interests of the country, they should bear it. The imposition of a small tax on the chief commodities consumed by mill labourers may be tried.

"I am in favour of local option. In Karachi the municipality must be given the power, subject to the control of the Collector and there is no chance of the municipality being swamped by people of one class. It should be given the power of opening and closing shops, fixing the hours of sale, reducing the number of shops and their location."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"When picketing was started in Karachi the consumption of liquor was reduced, and when it was stopped, the consumption resumed its former proportions. But picketing was not tried in Karachi for a sufficiently long period to admit of judgment whether it would have any appreciable effect.

"Government must be in a position to stop illicit distillation, and it is their business to look to it, just as they do at present in the case of illicit manufacture of salt.

"If Government have exhausted all other sources of meeting the deficit caused by loss of excise revenue, and are unable to do so, then, in the last resort, I am prepared to agree to tax building sites in villages."

To Mr. Mehta :—"I do think it advisable to ration foreign liquor as well as country liquor. I would prefer to end the 'on' shop system, but the question of having 'on' shops or 'off' shops may be left to the advisory committees.

"As regards rations to individual drinkers, I would prefer the power of rationing to be given to ward committees and not to communal committees.

"I am in favour of total prohibition and have no preference for toddy as against liquor."

To Dr. Patil :—"As regards age limit for drinkers, I would fix it at 18.

"I am in favour of encouraging temperance by Government subsidies to temperance associations."

* No written replies were furnished by this witness,

No. 109.

REPLIES OF MR. GOPALDAS JHAMATMAL, PLEADER, HYDERABAD (SIND).

1. I am by profession pleader and zemindar. I have interested myself in the cause of temperance for the last twenty-eight years. I presided at the Sind Provincial Temperance Conference some years ago. At present I am the President of the Sind Temperance League and one of the representatives of the Hyderabad (Sind) Municipality on the local Advisory Committee.

2. I am strongly of opinion that the excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 has failed and it has not put an effective check on intemperance. Its actual results are practically *nil*.

3. I advocate a radical change in the policy and my suggestions are detailed below.

4. I am strongly in favour of total prohibition and the measure can be carried out by legislation. Legislation can be introduced laying down ten years' limit for total prohibition. Every year there should be a reduction of ten per cent. in the supply and on the expiry of ten years the supply must be completely stopped. The measure is certainly a practical one. Only we want the will and the determination to carry it out. The results achieved in the United States of America very clearly show that in a country like India the measure will be found to be not only a practical one but will also result in enormous good to the people of the country.

5. (*a*) The facility referred to can be stopped by passing legislation on the lines of a Dangerous Drugs Act.

(*b*) I trust the total prohibition legislation will be an all-India legislation. I am sure the Indian States will not lag behind and it is fairly certain that they will also follow and enforce total prohibition. Borders of foreign territories can be strongly guarded.

(*c*) In India, above all, there is the least danger of serious discontent. The movement of Mahatma Gandhi is also revolutionizing the customs and habits of the people and there will be more joy than regret if the policy of total prohibition is introduced.

(*d*) and (*e*) If there is a 10 per cent. reduction every year, there will be no necessity of maintaining an unusually large preventive establishment for the purposes detailed in sub-paragraph (*d*); also the probability of people taking to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs will be considerably lessened.

6. I am emphatically of opinion that prohibition will do a very large amount of good to the country and I think total prohibition on the lines of ten years' limit is sure to succeed.

7. I think prohibitive legislation on the lines of ten years' limit is the most important means by which the goal can be reached. Propaganda work in furtherance of total prohibition both by Government and the public should be promoted.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors, whether distilled or fermented I would prohibit the use of toddy or shindi.

9. In my opinion absolute prohibition is both feasible and desirable.

10.. (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) These three means should be very largely utilized for reaching the goal of total prohibition. Let us assume that in the year 1921 the total amount of liquor that was consumed amounted to one lakh of gallons at the rate of five rupees per gallon and that the total number of shops in the Presidency was one thousand. I would suggest a reduction of 10 per cent. every year. Thus in 1922 the total amount of liquor that can be permitted to be consumed will be ninety thousand of gallons and the number of licensed shops will be nine hundred and the price of liquor should also be increased to Rs. 5-8-0 a gallon and so on. This process if rigidly enforced will result in complete prohibition on the expiry of ten years.

(*d*) Days and hours of sale must be considerably reduced. In my humble opinion no liquor should be sold on Sundays or holidays and it should not be sold during more than three days in a week. The hours of sale on any particular day should never exceed five.

(*e*) I am in favour of reducing the strength of liquor by at least 40 per cent.

(*f*) I am in favour of regulating the location of shops. Please see my answers to question nos. 11 and 12.

(*g*) I am for prohibiting the importation and sale of foreign liquor. I would however suggest that during the ten years' period of achieving the total prohibition, customs on foreign liquor should be increased by 500 per cent. If a bottle of foreign liquor is worth Rs. 3, the customs duties on it should be at least Rs. 15.

(*h*) There should be no retail sale licences either for country sale or foreign liquor.

(*i*) Liquor should not be sold to children below 18 years.

(*j*) I am strongly in favour of propaganda work by subsidising temperance associations, by lectures and films and by inserting instructive lessons on the evil of drink in text books for schools and colleges.

(*k*) No one should be sold more than a bottle a week.

11 and 12. During the ten years' limit period the principle of local-option should be freely and fully introduced. Local bodies should be invested with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. If the residents of any ward decide by a majority that there should be no liquor shop in their midst, no liquor shop should be located there.

I am certainly against making local bodies responsible for raising any part of the revenues that would be sacrificed by the exercise of the powers of local option in their area. Many local bodies are hardly able to make the two ends meet and it is not possible for them to bear the extra burden. I would suggest that the Provincial authorities should have the right to appropriate at least 25 per cent. of the income tax realized in their respective provinces.

13. Not at all. I believe I am not guilty of exaggeration when I say the Advisory Committees are simply a farce. I would suggest radical changes in their constitution; if they are to be useful, I would suggest that they should have executive powers and should possess a substantial non-official majority.

14. Undoubtedly the evil of drink contributes to a very large increase in crime. It is a historical fact. The policy of prohibition lately pursued in America also fully bears out the truth of the statement. Undeniably the evil has a serious effect on the output of work. High medical authorities also support the statement.

15. I have already suggested that the Provinces should have the right of resuming at least 25 per cent. of the income tax realized in their respective areas. I would also suggest some tax on luxuries such as cinemas, etc. I would further strongly recommend material reduction in expenditure, and I think it will not be out of place to suggest the abolition of all commissionerships and two executive councillorships and one ministership in the Presidency.

16. Yes. I would suggest legislation on the lines of a Dangerous Drugs Act.

17. The custom is prevalent in the lower classes and often as a medicine. Some children have lost their lives on account of large dozes.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. GOPALDAS JHAMATMAL replied to the President :—" The reduction of ten per cent. in the quantity of liquor supplied every year, which I suggest, should be applied to all areas uniformly, without reference to the intensity of the drinking habit in any area. I am against exempting Europeans from the prohibition law. It is likely that a portion of that community may agitate against the introduction of prohibition, but I think Government ought not to yield to any communal agitation in the matter of drink. It would be impolitic and improper for them to yield.

" In cities and towns municipalities should be allowed to exercise the power of local option; in rural areas the taluka boards should exercise it. The village panchayats should also be given that power. As regards villages, the panchayats should exercise local option without any reference to the whole community. When the members are elected to the panchayats the people know perfectly well that the panchayat has the power to close shops, and it is unnecessary to refer the matter again to the people. It will involve a tremendous waste of time and the members of the panchayat being in close touch with the people of the village will be able to reflect their opinion. In municipalities, however, these being larger bodies, I would like that each ward should have a say in the matter of local option, and a referendum may be taken in each ward before shops are closed in the particular locality. In the case of taluka areas where the people have not the necessary training to vote, I would like the power of local option to be exercised by the taluka board.

" We had picketing in Hyderabad in 1921. It was carried on for five or six months. Paid agents were employed and the effect produced was temporary. So far as Hyderabad is concerned picketing had no effect worth the name.

" As regards advisory committees, I think they should be given executive powers; they should have power of initiation. They should meet regularly, say, once in 3 months, and their duties should be clearly defined. They should be composed of more elected members. Honorary magistrates and particular communities should not be represented as such. The municipality must have greater representation. Temperance leagues may be represented. The majority decision of the committee should prevail, though the Collector may have the power to refer their decision to Government for orders before giving effect to it. If municipalities are given power to decide local option, the advisory committees should cease to function.

" If drinking at the shop is stopped and liquor is allowed to be taken home, the influence of the wife and the mother will restrain a person from drinking to excess. The Mahomedans feel ashamed to drink at their homes.

" There is no harm in Government putting up posters at liquor shops showing that they are for the complete cessation of liquor. I do not think that temperance propaganda by excise officials will have any effect, but if it is undertaken by revenue officials, it may have some result.

" There is a belief among the general public, and even among those who drink, that Government is more anxious for its revenue than for the welfare of the people.

" Legislation, in order to be successful, ought to be backed up by public opinion, which can be ascertained by the decisions of municipalities when they are given powers of local option."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" If the strength of liquor is reduced, the people will not like to drink it, and this will lead to reduction in consumption.

" If the duty on foreign liquor is increased, I do not think it will lead to illicit distillation of those liquors, because the people cannot manufacture anything to equal foreign liquor. The brandies and whiskies of Baroda are not liked by those addicted to foreign liquor.

" I am convinced that propaganda will have good effect. I was myself a liquor drinker when I was a student, but I gave it up as a result of propaganda.

" The City Magistrate's court is always full of Mochis and Sochis, and that shows that there is an increase in crime on account of drink."

To Mr. Mehta :—" If country liquor is rationed, there is no chance of people taking to foreign liquor, provided the duty on it is raised in the manner I have suggested, *namely*, by 500 per cent.

" I advocate the coupon system. The municipality should be the agency to issue the coupons, and all the coupon-holders should be allowed an equal quantity of liquor. It should apply to foreign liquor also.

" If the beer shops are closed, there is no chance of people taking to country liquor, provided the ' off ' system is adopted.

" Any taxation that may be imposed to make up the loss of excise revenue would no doubt fall on the general public, although about 10 per cent. only of the population would be the gainers by the introduction of prohibition, but I think it is their duty to bear it, as it is intended for the greatest good of the greatest number.

" If a ward decides not to have a shop in its area, some of the people may go to a neighbouring shop, but there will be many who will not, and that is something gained.

" Education by itself will not, I think, lead to a decrease in the consumption of liquor.

" If respectable persons who are in earnest about their work carry on picketing, that would be propaganda of the best kind.

" The mercantile community in Hyderabad give liquor to their wives and daughters also, and propaganda is the only remedy to check the evil."

To Dr. Patil :—" All the Bhangis do not necessarily drink every day, but some do. They drink mostly in the evening.

" Liquor shopkeepers do not sell any eatables in their premises."

No. 110.

REPLIES OF MR. PRIBHDAS SEVAKRAM, MANAGER, NAVA VIDYALAYA HIGH SCHOOL, HYDERABAD (SIND).

1. I am Manager and Honorary Secretary of Nava Vidyalaya Sind Education Association. I have also served on the Excise Advisory Committee for several years and have been working in the cause of Temperance for the last 35 years.

2. (*a*) The Excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 should be more practical.

(*b*) The actual results of the policy as it has been carried out in practice have not been, to my knowledge, very satisfactory. It has put no effective check on intemperance.

3. There should be a thorough change in the policy. Government should not necessarily depend upon Excise revenues.

4. Yes, I am in favour of total prohibition, but it should be gradual and by stages. The supply of liquor to vendors should be so regulated that they should get from 5 to 10 per cent. less every year to enable Government to stop traffic in this obnoxious trade of selling liquor within the maximum period of twenty years.

5. Being in favour of partial prohibition in the beginning I would suggest—

(*a*) Better supervision by the Excise Department.

(*b*) The propaganda of temperance literature, and publication of pamphlets showing the disastrous results due to the demon of drink.

(*c*) There might be at first some discontent, but ultimately the people would bless Government.

(*d*) A large preventive establishment would be necessary for some time; but when people have once realized the benefits which they would derive, the cost of the establishment would diminish to a great extent.

(*e*) When once there is an awakening amongst the people there will be less probability of their taking to other intoxicants and deleterious drugs.

6. Prohibition might be less effective in the beginning in the present generation, but ultimately even the people of the present generation would give up drink willingly, much more those of the next generation.

7. The end to be aimed at is the complete cessation of alcholic liquor and, in my opinion prohibitive legislation is the only means for attaining this object.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors, whether distilled or fermented. I would also prohibit the use of toddy and shindi, though they are not in much use in Sind.

9. *Vide* answer no. 4.

10. (*a*) It is absolutely necessary that liquor-shops should be rationed.

(*b*) The price of liquor should be at least doubled.

(*c*) The number of shops should be reduced to a great extent.

(*d*) On Sundays and other public holidays and during fairs and *mellas* the shops should remain closed. They should ordinarily remain open daily from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and again from 4 to 6 p.m., so that sweepers, masons and other workmen may have less opportunities of indulging in drink.

(*e*) Reduction of the strength of liquor would make poor people ultimately give it up.

(*f*) Municipalities and local boards should have a voice in the location of liquor-shops. They should not be situated near markets, schools and public places of entertainment.

(*g*) It would certainly be better if the sale of foreign liquor be also now restricted, and gradually prohibited.

(*h*) The more the licenses are regulated and even some of them prohibited, the better it will be for the public.

(*i*) No one under the age of 18 should be allowed to purchase liquor.

(*j*) Temperance associations for grown-up men and Bands of Hope for boys should be encouraged and subsidized. Lessons on temperance in school text-books should be incorporated.

(*k*) Removal of liquor from shops should as far as possible be discouraged. Lowest possible limit for a family of five persons on an average should be fixed.

11. I am in favour of the principle of local option. It should be exercised through people's representatives, say, municipalities and local boards.

12. I have no objection to municipalities and local boards exercising the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. I do not approve of the idea

that they should be held responsible for raising any part of the revenues sacrificed. Government can easily raise money by taxing luxuries.

13. The existing Advisory Committees have been doing some useful work. The time has arrived when they should consist of a non-official majority with all the powers the Collector now exercises.

14. The evil of drink contributes to an increase in crime as drunkards commit more crimes than sober-minded persons. The output of work of one who drinks diminishes considerably.

15. Cinemas, theatres and other pleasures should be taxed. Inheritance tax may be imposed, if more money be needed.

16. Opium should be sold by druggist and used medicinally only. The sale of hemp drugs should be restricted to small quantities.

17. Among poorer classes the custom of giving opium to children is prevalent, and on several occasions poor innocent babies have lost their lives owing to carelessness of either their mothers or other relatives.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. PRIBHDAS SEVAKRAM replied to the President :—" I agree with the evidence given by Mr. Gopaldas Jhamatmal regarding the constitution and functions of advisory committees and also as regards local option. I admit that there are difficulties regarding the levy of inheritance tax in the case of Hindu joint families where property is inherited by right of survivorship, but I think that methods could be devised to overcome them, though I have not thought over it."

To Dr. Patil :—" In the case of low class people, I am not in favour of allowing them to take bottles home, as there is the danger of their inducing their wives and children to drink. In the case of high class people they may be so allowed. I agree to the coupon system and sale of liquor in sealed bottles containing not more than four ounces."

To. Mr. Mehta :—" I would advocate that as in the case of country liquor, Government should control the sale of foreign liquor. It would be more consistent if they themselves imported foreign liquor and sold it, preventing importation by private agencies.

" I am for consulting the people as regards the number of shops. I would be in favour of having boards, like the proposed new school boards, to advise about the opening of liquor-shops, etc. I have been on the advisory committee for several years, and I am not so much disappointed as Mr. Gopaldas. We have been able to close 10 country liquor-shops in ten years. It is true that during the last three years there was no meeting held, but only the other day we closed one liquor-shop. The Collector consults the members of the committee often and he has been helpful to us in closing country liquor-shops wherever we have suggested.

" Picketting has only a temporary effect. The drinkers make promises not to drink, but as soon as the picket is removed they begin to drink.

" I am for prohibition by legislation. I believe in freedom and liberty, but not in license."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" When I stated that luxuries should be taxed, I had in mind entertainments, dramas, nautch parties, etc.

To Mr. Mehta :—" As regards propaganda I may point out that we have been able to convert many of our boys in the school. The method in which we can teach temperance in schools is by way of lessons in text-books. Another method we employ is to take students during the Holi holidays in a procession through the streets, preaching to the people not to drink. The students are kept busily engaged during the whole day and they are also feasted in the gardens. I do find that many of our boys keep teetotalers even after leaving school."

## No. 111.

REPLIES OF MR. WALI MAHOMED HUSSANALLY, B.A., LL.B., M.L.A., KARACHI.

1. I am a retired member of the P. C. S. ; a special F. C. Magistrate ; an M.L.A. and a member of the Karachi Municipal Corporation.

2. I am generally in accord with the policy of the Government of India as outlined in the extract. As regards the working of it I am afraid I am not quite satisfied. I do not think an effective check has been put upon intemperance but that I ascribe to the working of the policy and not to the policy itself.

3 and 4. I am of opinion that drinking should be made penal up to the age of 25 years as also selling liquor to a man under that age. As a Musalman I should be very glad if all intoxicants could be altogether prohibited but I do not consider that millenium practical politics just at the present moment for two reasons especially. First, because the sacrifice of revenue cannot be borne by Governments of the Provinces and they have recently explored all available sources and they cannot levy any additional taxes without the proverbial breaking of the camel's back. And secondly, because total prohibition is sure to fail all at once. The ground must be prepared for it for some years before, as it was perhaps done in America. The suggestion I have made above will be a good preparing ground.

5. (*a*) This cannot supply a large quantity. Yet wherever there are large plantations of this kind it will not be difficult to guard the same.

(*b*) The same restrictions as are imposed upon the importation of liquor at present should be continued.

(*c*) I do not advocate total prohibition, yet I consider that if it is known that the Sarkar has stopped liquor people will in a short time accommodate themselves to the law.

(*d*) It should not be a serious difficulty.

(*e*) This is indeed a great disadvantage and therefore also I do not advocate total prohibition.

6. This is an argument in favour of my partial prohibition.

7. Volunteer associations subsidized by Government ought to work amongst those classes who are known to drink. If piquetting liquor shops has succeeded, such piquetting ought to succeed also in respect of localities where these habitual drinkers reside.

8. I would not extend prohibition to fermentation for some time if there is to be total prohibition at all.

9 and 10. It is difficult to dogmatize on all or any of such methods. They should all be tried wherever possible and some are sure to succeed. I lay stress upon (*c*), (*d*), (*f*) and (*i*). In regard to the last I have already given my opinion. The reduction in the number of shops and the location of them are also very important factors. At present in large cities like Karachi liquor shops, whether country or foreign, are permitted in very frequented streets and bazaars or in the close proximity of theatres and cinemas. This should at once be stopped. Such shops ought to be located far away in unfrequented places, far away from places of public amusement.

11. It should be tried.

12. I answer the first part in the affirmative and the second in the negative.

13. No, because the selection has generally been not the best.

14. I dare say.

15. My proposal will not appreciably affect revenue. Nor can I suggest any new sources in these days when both the Provincial and Central Governments have already exhausted the same and taxed the people to a breaking point. Any loss of revenue must therefore be made up by ruthless retrenchments in every direction, except menial and ministerial establishments.

16. I would restrict young men under 25 here also as above.

17. Not much in vogue in Sind.

### ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. WALI MAHOMED HUSSANALLY replied to the President :—" In regard to the location of shops I am dead against locating shops in public places.

" In Karachi shops have been established in some places without the least consideration. Right in front of the cinema near the Khalikdina Hall there is a liquor shop. A murder was committed there about eighteen months or two years ago. I find that the shop still exists there. People are in the habit of getting licenses for selling liquor under the pretence of opening refreshment rooms and restaurants. Recently such a restaurant has been established next to another cinema on the Bunder Road. I believe that in Karachi at any rate there are so many of these licensed refreshment rooms and many of them can be done away with at once.

" I would not only minimise temptations to people but would also gradually reduce the number of shops and thus have prohibition gradually and in course of time. Any sudden move

towards prohibition would however be fatal. I think that the present system of the Collector acting with advisory committees has failed and I am rather inclined to believe, without meaning any offence to members of advisory committees, that they give in too much to the Collector's opinion. Therefore I think that it will be a much better course to let municipalities and local boards have power to open, close, or remove liquor shops. I would not mind giving executive powers to a sub-committee of the municipality in this respect, but there also there is a danger of some canvassing going on. So far as Karachi is concerned, I would give the power to the chief officer, subject to the power of control by the managing committee or a sub committee.

"As regards ascertaining the wishes of the people of a locality regarding the question of opening or closing shops in their locality, I think that it is unnecessary to take a referendum. The municipal representatives of the city may be expected to know the wishes and wants of the people. I do not think there is the danger of the representatives forcing their views on the people. There is the counterbalancing influence of joint deliberation.

"So far as Sind is concerned, I do not think there is much of the drink evil in rural areas, because Sind is three-fourths Mahomedan and one-fourth Hindu, and Mahomedans as a rule do not take liquor. So far as our rural areas are concerned it is much easier to stop liquor there than in towns and cities. District local boards and taluka local boards may be given power to open, close or remove shops, but I would not give that power to village panchayats."

*Q.* Would it not be better to take a referendum before shops are closed ? Have you not heard the complaint made that educated people force their opinions on the people who are not prepared to follow them ? *A.* Yes. At the same time educated people also drink, more than the uneducated people sometimes. I would not go to the length of saying that the educated people are more addicted to drink than the uneducated. In Sind the uneducated people do not drink so much as the educated classes. The uneducated Sindhi Hindu population do take country liquor, but not to any very objectionable extent. So far as cities like Karachi are concerned, the evil has been brought from outside by the immigrant population from the Presidency proper.

*Q.* Is it such a widespread social evil that Government should try to prevent it by legislation ? *A.* I think in large towns it is, because the mixed population from outside is very large in those places. The social evil may not have gone so far, as far as Sind is concerned, as to require Government interference, but looking to the Presidency as a whole, I think the evil has gone far enough to require coercive remedies. I certainly do not advocate total abolition of liquor all of a sudden, because there is the chief difficulty of finance. We have to find out ways and means to make good the loss of revenue.

I have not thought about the question of meeting the revenue.

*Q.* One idea suggested is that the city or town which is to be benefitted by prohibition or restriction should be made to make good any loss of revenue and that certain commodities consumed by the people of that city or town may be taxed. *A.* That method of taxation is open at least to one objection that I can think of at the present moment. In Karachi the population is more than half Mahomedan and a little less than half non-Mahomedan. I do not think that the Mahomedan population, who do not drink and would not therefore benefit by prohibition or restriction, would agree to their being taxed for the sake of benefitting non-Mahomedans. That is a thing which requires a little thoughtful consideration. I for one would strongly oppose the idea of taxing Mahomedans for the sake of benefitting non-Mahomedans.

*Q.* Do you stoutly maintain that so far as this question is concerned, if any tax is imposed it must be borne by the people who drink and not by the people who do not drink ? *A.* I do not say that. But I say that Mahomedans will have a grievance that they are taxed for the benefit of others. The whole question should be thought out carefully and no empirical formula can be arrived at a moment's notice.

*Q.* Can you suggest any form of taxation by which the drinking classes only would be reached ? *A.* It requires thought and consideration and perhaps consultation."

To Mr. Jadhav :—"So far as Sind is concerned, the population is so tame that if the Sarkar want to abolish liquor all of a sudden they will make no resistance but abide by the Sarkar's wishes."

Mr. Mehta : "If reduction of consumption is brought about by rationing the quantity allowed to shops, is there not the danger of the man going first getting his supply and the man going last not getting anything ? *A.* That will happen only for a short time. If rationing is introduced, every one will get a reduced supply in course of time.

*Q.* Would you favour the coupon system ? *A.* No ; for this reason : supposing I drink, I must go and take out a coupon, and I must proclaim to the world that I am a drinker, which I would not. If I am addicted to drink I must have it in any case. Why do you put me to that humiliation ? As soon as I die, the evil dies with me ; you can see that my son does not drink.

"I am not in favour of referring the question of location and opening of shops to ward electors, because the franchise is widened from time to time and you get every sort of voters. It will be possible for the five or ten thousand municipal sweepers to say that they want drink and you will have to open a shop in their locality.

"I would certainly advocate the rationing of foreign liquor, though I may not be for total prohibition for various reasons. One is that the European population do require their customary peg in the evening and we have no right to impose our opinions on them. With all that the rationing of European liquor will be a very useful thing to do and ought to be done.

"I would encourage the use of Nira in order to discourage country liquor among the lower classes."

The President: If total prohibition comes on after a few years, will Europeans get their drink? *A* As I said, we have no right to impose our views on them.

*Q.* The Englishmen are not allowed to get spirits in America. *A.* You may be theoretically right in saying that if prohibition is enforced for other communities in India, it should be enforced in the case of Europeans also, but we have to look at it from a practical point of view.

Dr. Patil: You said that the evil is not great among the Mahomedans. Don't you think it will spread in course of time? *A.* I do not think it will.

*Q.* I am told that in Hyderabad many of the Mahomedans drink. *A.* Certainly not. There may be a few, half a dozen or a dozen. They may be drinking bhang, but not liquor.

"I would not agree to the taxation of tobacco. I am a determined smoker. I admit however that smoking and drinking should be prohibited for juveniles below 25 years.

"I am not in favour of heavy fines for breakers of liquor laws."

No. 112.

REPLIES OF THE EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, KARACHI.

1. Members of Advisory Committee present:

1. W. W. Smart, Esquire, I.C.S., Collector.
2. J. C. Curry, Esquire, District Superintendent of Police.
3. W. N. Richardson, Esquire, City Magistrate.
4. Dr. Khubchand, representative of the Sind Medical Union.
5. R. S. Shewaram Dewanmal, representative of the Karachi Municipality.
6. Mr. Tikamdas Wadhumal, B.A., LL.B., representative of the Karachi Municipality.
7. Mr. Abdul Rehman, Bar.-at-Law, representative, Temperance League.

Nos. 1, 2 and 7 only have been on the Advisory Committee before.

2. (*a*) The policy is sound.

(*b*) The results in Karachi have been good.

3. No change is suggested.

4. No.

5. *Nil.*

6. We consider there are no data on which an opinion could be formed.

7. We consider that the present policy should be continued. Further experience of its results will decide any such questions.

8. *Nil.*

9. The present policy should be continued.

10. (*a*) Rationing of shops has been introduced but if a shop or shops are closed, the rationing of those left should not be based on the consumption of those closed.

(*b*) The price is already very high and we consider that to raise it would not further but injure the cause of temperance.

(*c*) We favour reduction.

(*d*) We favour further reduction in hours from 9 to 12 a.m. to 10 to 12 a.m. and from 2 to 9-30 p.m. to 2 to 9 p.m.

(*e*) We favour further reduction of strength.

(*f*) Location of shops is already regulated as objections to new shops are invited and disposed of by this committee.

(*g*) As long as the price of foreign liquor is kept higher than that of country liquor of the same strength we consider that no argument for restriction exists.

(*h*) We propose the abolition of foreign "on" in favour of genuine refreshment rooms and later on the application of the same principle to country liquor shops.

(*i*) This is already done, but we advise the raising of the age limit from 16 to 18.

(*j*) We should be willing to recommend a subsidy only after a society had done some practical preventive work.

(*k*) We recommend that one gallon be removable from country liquor shops in the mofussil and half a gallon in Karachi city.

11 and 12. We consider that the present system of modified local option which consists in inviting objections and the consideration of the same by the Advisory Committee should continue and that it is not necessary or desirable to invest local bodies with any powers in excise matter.

13. *Nil.*

14. Yes, if excessive drinking is meant.

15. *Nil.*

16. We consider that *ganja* and *charas* are most deleterious and if illicit importation would be stopped, then we would advise their total prohibition.

17. "Bala golis" containing very small quantities of opium mixed with other drugs are sold in Karachi and their use is considered by the medical profession in Karachi as beneficial to the preservation of life among small children.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. W. P. COWIE, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi, on behalf of the Karachi Excise Advisory Committee, replied to the President :—"I am the President of the Excise Advisory Committee,

Karachi, but being a new-comer I have not had any experience of the committee. The functions of the advisory committees are defined in the Excise Manual. If members of the committees do not know their functions, they have only to write to the chairman who will supply them.

"I agree that it would be better to invest the advisory committees with larger powers, but it has got to be remembered that the excise policy has got to remain more or less consistent all over the Presidency. I have no objection to giving the committees more determining powers if an officer such as the Collector is given sufficient power of control over their actions. I have had no experience of advisory committees, but personally I have no objection to giving representatives of the people a more determining voice in regard to location, closing, etc., of shops. I would not however entrust the municipality alone with that power under the Collector. The municipality may have representatives on the committee, but the committee should be composed of other representatives also such as representatives from temperance associations, other local bodies, Government officers and so on. The fact that honorary magistrates are represented on these committees may be due to the reason that they represent a respectable class and they are the non-official magistrates who deal with cases arising from drunkenness."

*Q.* Would you like to have quarterly meetings of these committees ? *A.* I would consult them whenever any important matter came up. People here are very busy with committees and they would not like to be called to decide petty matters.

*Q.* The complaint is that meetings are hardly called, and the opinions of the advisory committees are not respected. The belief therefore is that it is no use people serving on these committees unless more powers are given to them. Would you consider it detrimental to public interests to give them a more determining voice, namely, that their decisions should be accepted by the Collector unless he considers them to be perverse, in which case he may stay his action and refer the matter to higher authorities ? *A.* I have had no experience of these committees, and therefore I do not know what sort of members they have.

*Q.* Don't you think that the representatives of the type you have in municipalities and local boards are sufficiently well advanced to be entrusted with more powers ? *A.* I think on the whole they might be allowed to have those powers and that the Collector should follow their advice unless he has strong reasons to disagree.

To the President :—" I do not know much about ganja, but from what little I have heard about charas, I think it ought to be totally prohibited. Also, there are only very few charas shops in every district.

" I have no experience of *Bala Golis*.

" I am against total prohibition, partly because I do not think it is necessary, and partly because it is not practicable, on account of the chances of illicit distillation for one thing, and human nature for another. The people of this country are not educated up to it yet. I do not think it is the business of Government to create public opinion in its favour; it is for the people themselves to do it. The temperance associations and leagues may undertake the work, and provided they do useful work, they may be subsidised by Government. Neither do I think it is the business of revenue officials to undertake temperance work, because it is not Government's duty to mould public opinion on moral questions of this kind.

" I understand that certain mills in Bombay have opened refreshment rooms, libraries, etc., in places where the mill hands live, and this should have considerable effect in checking the drink evil. I do not think it is the duty of Government to subsidise such undertakings, as the millowners are making sufficient profits ; at best, Government may advise the millowners to afford the millhands sufficient facilities for recreation and counter-attractions of the kind mentioned which to my mind do an enormous amount of good and benefit both the hands and the owners in the long run.

" I do not think it will be advisable to make it a condition of the license that the licensee should sell food and other refreshments at his shop."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" If 1 lakh of gallons are consumed in a locality having 100 shops, and by the introduction of the rationing system the number of gallons is reduced by 10 per cent. and the number of shops by 5 per cent., the 95 shops should not get 90,000 gallons, but each shop should get a proportionately reduced quantity.

" I think the price of liquor is now sufficiently high, and in Sind there is a good deal of importation of Khairpur liquor, as it is considered very delicious and it is also cheaper. If the price is still further increased, there is bound to be smuggling, which cannot be stopped unless the excise establishment is increased. "

To the President :—" There are no treaty regulations with Khairpur by which to compel that State to increase their duty. It is a lucrative business to the States, and they cannot, I think, be forced to come into line with us. If you are to go in for total prohibition, you will have to do it, otherwise it will be a complete failure. Nearly one-third of India is Indian State territory."

To Mr. Mehta :—" I am against off licenses. In a report by an excise officer recently, he gave it as his opinion that in a certain mill area if the on system were introduced, it would reduce consumption by at least a half. There are, however, strong opinions either way.

" I have not thought much about the question of foreign liquor, which is drunk both by Europeans and Indians. The Europeans do not drink to excess, and they can be trusted to look after themselves.

" If we ration country liquor and keep open foreign liquor, it is likely that all the money will go to the Government of India, so that, unless the Government of India can be persuaded to march with the provincial Governments by putting restrictions on foreign liquor also, it would not be of much use. The problem, from the point of view of consumption, will be different for cities and rural areas, as in the districts there are very few foreign liquor shops. In the cities they may take to foreign liquor ; as a matter of fact the consumption of beer is going up tremendously.

" I do not know much about toddy.

" I do not see any reason why the hours of sale should not be reduced. In my opinion, the three ways in which consumption of country liquor can be checked are restriction of hours, reduction of shops and rationing.

" I think liquor should not be sold to persons below 18."

To Dr. Patil :—" If there is further reduction of strength of country liquor, they might take to foreign liquor. It is really a matter of taste, and the general tendency is for a man to stick to his own brand.

" The experience in other countries is that if a drunkard does not get liquor, he will take to other drugs. In America, I understand, they drink all sorts of things.

" There is a great outcry against the system of allowing a man only one bottle at a time in the districts. But I would keep it as it is. I am an anti-prohibitionist, but I am not a pro-liquor man. From a practical point of view, I do not think it is any good talking about prohibition. In America, in spite of the tremendous sums spent on excise establishment, they have not been successful, and any man who wants liquor can get it if he pays for it. In this country it will be a far more difficult proposition on account of the facilities for illicit distillation. Although it may not be easy in cities, still there will be illicit importation there. Speaking as a practical man, I do not think we can have prohibition straight away, because we cannot afford it. It would require ten times the present excise establishment to make it successful."

*Statement handed over by Mr. Cowie.*

| Year. | Karachi District (excluding Karachi City). | | | | | | | Karachi City. | | | | | Total. | License and vend fee. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Country liquor. | | Foreign liquor. | | | | | Country liquor. | | Foreign liquor. | | | | |
| | Consumption in proof gallons. | License fee. | Wines. | Spirits. | Beer. | Total consumption in bulk gallons. | License and vend fee. | Consumption in proof gallons. | License fee. | wines. | Spirits. | Beer. | | |
| | | Rs. | Gallons | Gallons | Gallons | | Rs. | | Rs. | Gallons | Gallons | Gallons | Gallons | Rs. |
| 1912-13 .. | 15,203 | .. | 3,832 | 378 | 1,005 | 5,215 | .. | 58,543 | .. | 6,704 | 35,672 | 90,680 | 133,056 | |
| 1913-14 .. | 16,160 | .. | 1,412 | 374 | 1,862 | 3,648 | .. | 58,647 | .. | 8,500 | 39,428 | 124,670 | 172,606 | |
| 1914-15 .. | 15,272 | .. | 732 | 220 | 515 | 1,467 | .. | 58,013 | .. | 8,750 | 39,636 | 132,866 | 181,272 | |
| 1915-16 .. | 16,978 | .. | 507 | 533 | 252 | 1,292 | .. | 58,599 | .. | 3,274 | 23,578 | 48,874 | 75,726 | |
| 1916-17 .. | 14,136 | .. | 412 | 280 | 248 | 940 | .. | 61,925 | 78,165 | 2,784 | 19,934 | 45,724 | 18,442 | 23,387 |
| 1917-18 .. | 11,760 | 18,032 | 417 | 397 | 703 | 1,517 | 527 | 75,106 | 1,14,874 | 6,804 | 31,985 | 179,871 | 217,660 | 27,818 |
| 1918-19 .. | 11,209 | 26,226 | .. | 127 | 488 | 615 | 626 | 70,133 | 2,84,961 | 8,158 | 35,214 | 151,846 | 195,207 | 33,834 |
| 1919-20 .. | 12,535 | 27,640 | 81 | 418 | 730 | 1,229 | 450 | 68,636 | 5,79,950 | 8,694 | 42,501 | 180,144 | 231,339 | 40,509 |
| 1920-21 .. | 12,061 | 42,564 | 78 | 332 | 769 | 1,179 | 450 | 73,037 | 3,79,950 | 10,474 | 20,338 | 167,195 | 198,007 | 83,686 |
| 1921-22 .. | 6,348 | 39,613 | 60 | 267 | 1,419 | 1,746 | 773 | 51,103 | 5,10,400 | 9,680 | 37,218 | 170,635 | 237,529 | 1,04,734 |
| 1922-23 .. | .. | 25,206 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 4,07,200 | 6,842 | 35,768 | 181,826 | .. | 2,56,650 |
| | Population of Karachi District (excluding Karachi City). | | | | According to census of 1911: 362,500 / 1921: 325,200 | | | Population of Karachi City | | | According to the census of 1911: 159,300 / 1921: 216,900 | | | |

| | Weak | Strong |
|---|---|---|
| | Bulk gallons | |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 13,300 | 71,300 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 10,000 | 79,000 |
| 1921-22 .. .. | 13,000 | 58,000 |
| 1922-23 .. .. | 25,500 | 49,000 |

No. 113.

REPLIES OF DR. POPATLAL A. BHOOPATKAR, M.B.B.S., HONORARY SECRETARY, KARACHI HEALTH ASSOCIATION.

1. The profession to which I belong is that of a medical man and in that capacity I had occasions to come across various men addicted to drinking of all stages, advanced as well as moderate. Thus irrespective of economic and social reasons that are well known to men interested in the observation of this subject I humbly claim to know especially much more the physical effects produced by the drink and drug habits.

2. (*a*) The excise policy of Government, as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905, though introduced to minimise and control the excessive spread of the drink habit, has, for the reasons obviously known to all, fallen short of achieving the objects for which it was introduced, nay, it has failed to do any improvement in the then existing evil.

(*b*) The results of the above-said policy, though have apparently increased the revenues, have fallen far short of the objects aimed by the legislature at the time of introducing this policy. In my humble opinion the said policy has not put any check on intemperance.

3. The change in the above policy should be a bold and emphatic one and strong in its measure. It should straight off aim at total prohibition within a prescribed period of five years. The suggestions I humbly offer are briefly summarised below :—

(1) The legislature should announce a policy aiming at total prohibition within a prescribed period of five years during which time rules controlling progressive check over the sale of liquors should be introduced in co-operation with municipalities and local boards.

(2) The legislature should not put an age limit, say 20, for individuals, under which drinking should be declared as criminal.

(3) The number of shops should be in decreasing arithmetic progression within the prescribed period.

(4) Hours for the said shops should be between 11 and 5 p.m. only.

4. Yes. I think total prohibition is the only cure to root out evil. My reasons are based upon observations on the ill-effects produced by the drink and drug habit.

(1) It makes a man physically subject to a number of disorders even when he is drinking in a so-called moderation.

(2) Socially, he renders himself unfit for society.

(3) Morally, as he becomes subject to the chronic habit becomes a very weak-minded man.

(4) Economically, he ruins himself and hardly renders service to his family or country.

Thus from the physical, social, moral and economic points of view total prohibition is the only saviour of a man addicted to the habit of drinking.

Steps suggested are :—

(1) Give an option to municipalities and local boards for their respective districts.

(2) The number of shops should be every year decreased, aiming at total prohibition within 5 years.

(3) The location of shops must be at the farther end of the town, thus causing inconvenience and indirectly reducing the temptation to drunkards.

(4) Hours of these shops should be from 11 to 5 p.m.

(5) Age limit of 20 under which an individual drinking must be subjected to law.

5. As I favour gradual but total prohibition the objections urged against this policy can be solved as under :—

(*a*) Government's present existing control over the illicit methods of obtaining liquor is I think quite sufficient. However one or two inspectors may be maintained to bring such actions to book.

(*b*) Indian States themselves I think shall be very glad to associate and co-operate with us. Even otherwise the existing Department already looks after these things.

(*c*) No chance of discontent to prevail because the method of prohibition suggested is a gradual one.

(*e*) The probability of people taking to other intoxicants will not be increased.

6. Prohibition will gradually make a healthy effect on the present generation and will certainly work out a great deal for an amelioration of the future generation in their moral, social, physical and financial status.

7. Prohibitive legislation as well as encouragement to temperance societies will solve the problem.

8. Yes.

10. Means suggested for controlling consumption are quite workable. They should be so operated as to aim at total prohibition within 5 years.

11. Yes. Municipalities or local boards be invested with powers to govern or control this according to the views of their own people.

12. Yes.

No.

13. Existing Advisory Committees have not been able to do much useful work as their scope of working on account of the present legislation is a very limited one.

Changes in their constitution.

14. Yes. The evil of drink is largely responsible for crime and for the moral deterioration of the people.

15. The deficit that will result by the adoption of this new policy in the Excise Department will be adjusted in two ways :

(1) Direct.

(2) Indirect.

(1) Direct will cover the new and increased taxation such as—

(*a*) Taxation on cinemas and theatres ; 12½ per cent. on their gross earnings.

(*b*) Increased taxation on arms and ammunition.

(*c*) Introduction of terminal taxes in the port towns.

(2) Indirect—

(*a*) People's savings arising from the prohibition of drinking will be diverted to other harmless luxuries, such as theatres, purchase of other imported articles, and thus help the revenue to an extent.

(*b*) Improved habits will put in more work and materially change the prospects of labour and industry and thus income to the Imperial as well as local Governments will increase.

(*c*) As crime will be reduced, there will be a saving in the cost on the maintenance of the Police and Jails.

16. An equally effective restriction is necessary in case of opium and hemp drugs.

17. Opium is being administered to children by mothers to lull the children. This is done especially by the illiterate and working class people much more to enable the mother to apply herself to a piece of work to earn her wages.

This custom is certainly injurous to the growth and health of the children and becomes a great barrier in their recovery when they become subject to an attack of pneumonia, typhoid, etc.

---

*27th July 1922.*

DEAR DR. POPATLAL,

I attach herewith answers to the Excise questions and I am sorry we have not been able to put up a joint answer.

In principle that going "dry" is good you and I are at one, but whilst you think it possible, I *don't.*

British India is honey-combed with Indian States and in the latter liquor running will become the most profitable trade when British India goes "dry." The making of home-made liquor is childish play and the concoction generally hell fire. The result of a so-called dry India would in my opinion be—

(1) more drunkenness, for prohibition makes a man intemperate when he *does* obtain drink ;

(2) no excise revenue ;

(3) greatly increased cost of preventive services ;

(4) a large proportion of the population spending their life trying to break the law and most of them succeeding ;

(5) a great deal of most harmful liquor being drunk instead of the comparatively harmless liquor of to-day.

If you are circulating the answers, please circulate this letter to show my reasons for not being able to agree with you.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. W. STANLEY.

REPLIES OF MR. C. S. WENTWORTH STANLEY OF THE KARACHI HEALTH ASSOCIATION.

2. In so far that intemperance in Sind is rare I consider that the Government's policy is satisfactory.

3. No.

4. No, I do not consider total prohibition is a practical measure.

6. In so far that prohibition results in (*1*) secret drinking and intemperate drinking as is evidenced by the present conditions ruling in the United States and (*2*) an increase in the consumption of drugs which are more harmful than liquor, I do not consider that nominal total prohibition will have a large influence on the next generation.

9. I consider the best method to control and restrict the consumption of liquor is—

(1) By the imposition of an excise duty to make the price as high as is compatible with illicit liquor not taking the place of liquor made and sold under control.

(2) Limitation of the number of liquor-shops.

(3) Limitation of the hours of sale.

(4) Regarding it as a serious offence for a licensee to supply liquor to a man on the premises to the extent that he becomes drunk and incapable.

10. (*a*) I do not agree with this suggestion; I am inclined to the view that trade during permitted hours and under license should be free.

(*b*) To increase the price of liquor would probably lead to considerable discontent. To leave the price as at present and reduce the strength would be an effective check on drinking without bringing in the element of discontent to the same degree.

(*c*), (*d*) and (*f*) With due consideration to circumstances.

(*g*) Seeing that foreign liquor is (*1*) widely speaking good liquor, (*2*) the price is high and (*3*) a large revenue is produced thereby, I am against restricting or prohibiting the import.

(*i*) Yes, say, 14 years.

(*j*) I do not consider that Government are the correct channel through which the subsidisation of temperance work should be done. If there is sufficient public interest in the question, temperance work will be carried out immaterial of any action on the part of Government.

(*k*) I see no justification for the restriction or prohibition of the removal of liquor from the shops.

11. I am against local option. At present the Karachi Municipality is already overburdened with work and have great responsibilities, nor is their executive suited to this nature of work.

12. If local option was introduced and restriction was carried to an extent which resulted in serious loss of revenue, I think that the bodies responsible for those restrictions should be equally responsible for the replacement of the revenue. The basis on which this should be determined should be a fixed number of shops per head of the population as laid down by Government, varying according to locality and the habits of the people.

14. Of course the *evil* of drinking (*viz.*, excessive drinking) contributes to the increase of crime and affects the efficiency of labour.

15. As the above recommendations would not result in a reduction or extinction of revenue, there would be no necessity to tap any other source.

17. Amongst the ayah class it is rare but known to exist.

*Additional written statement furnished by Dr. Popatlal Bhoopatkar.*

Karachi, 4th May 1923.

Criticisms on the excise policy as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905.

1. Excise policy of 1905 *has failed* in all the aspects of the question, as for instance,

(*1*) Consumption in gallons has increased beyond all proportion as compared to the population. In 1903-04 for province of Sind it was 160,322 gallons for a population of 3,210,910, whereas 1920-21 it has increased to 228,223 gallons for the population of 3,277,656.

(*2*) Increase in duty as well as vend fees has not mitigated the evil.

In 1903-04, duty was 5-1-9, vend fees 0-3-7

In 1920-21, duty was 20-11-0, vend fees 4-7-8

(*3*) Restriction of shops has not achieved the desired result.

In 1903-04 .. No. of shops 296.

In 1920-21 .. ,, 158.

(*4*) Similarly diluting
(*5*) ,, rationing } all have failed.
(*6*) ,, age limit

The above statement applies to country liquor also.

II. The Excise policy of the Government contains *elements* which are *inconsistent*.

The Government of India state in their Resolution that it is necessary to *make due provision* for the needs of those who use alcohol in moderation. I condemn this principle and maintain that it is no part of the duty of Government to make provision for the needs of such persons. Even though Government may not interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation, it is far from their duty to see to it that the needs of such persons are satisfied.

If the matter is analysed, such conception of the duty of the Government is *inconsistent* with the fulfilment of the other part of their policy, *viz.*, to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and discourage excesses among those who do.

As for instance, in a locality of three classes of people—

(*1*) Moderate drinkers.

(*2*) Excessive drinkers.

(*3*) Abstainers.

Thus the duty of providing shops for the first set is inconsistent with the principle of (*a*) minimising temptations and (*b*) discouraging excesses among those who drink.

III. Excise policy was framed at a time when the system of government both imperial and provincial was autocratic and when the question of establishing self-government in India was deemed outside the range of practical politics. It therefore takes no thought of the implications of the Reform Act which is aiming at a system of self-government.

Thus I have proved that the excise policy has absolutely failed in all its objects.

I am an ardent believer in having a *bold and emphatic* change.

*Prohibition within five years period is the only cure.*

*Objections raised.*

I. *Revenue.*

Question of revenue is hurled against the prohibitionist with a force more than it deserves.

(*1*) Government of India have said in their Resolution of 7th September 1905 in connection with the excise policy: "And to furtherance of this policy, *namely, all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated*". Let me ask you what the Government is prepared to sacrifice in revenue to mitigate the evil for which the excise policy of Government is more responsible than the people?

(*2*) Argument is advanced that people are taxed to the brim, but, if so, why did the Government of India introduce *salt tax* against the desires of the whole nation?

In my opinion *taxation is not required* if the Government of India have a will to meet with the demands of the people.

Only one item of *reduction of expenditure in higher services and military expenditure* will solve the whole difficulty.

II. *Discontent.*

Much is made of the apprehensions for discontent.

Even those addicted to drink do without it when they have no other alternative, *e.g.*, in jail.

Even after the Reform Act did the Government of India care for the discontent created by the Governor-General's certification of the salt tax?

I mean there will not be any discontent by a legislature introduced by Government for the benefit of the people of India and even if there be any discontent in a very small section of the whole nation the Government of India can easily overcome it.

III. Illicit methods of obtaining liquor.

I think they are controlable in India.

Even in America Sir Arthur Newsholine, K.C.B., M.D., late Principal Medical Officer of the local Government Board of England, in his book on " Prohibition in America " says that there is no evidence that prohibition has caused increased consumption of drugs, etc., in substitution for alcohol and quotes the opinion of Dr. Bevan, former President of the American Medical Association, that " The number of these cases is very small compared with the number that were made drug addicts by the free use of alcohol in the past".

*Local option.*

Yes, by a referendum to the electorate by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.

*Question of deficit revenue.*

Must be shared half by Government and half by municipalities and that too for a prescribed period of five years during which time Government are supposed to adjust the question partly by reduction of expenditure and partly by having contributions from the Imperial Government.

*Advisory Committees.*

Their constitution must be entirely changed; (*1*) they must be composed of people's representatives and (*2*) they must go by people's views in determining the location of shops, hours, etc., helping temperance work, etc. At present advisory committees have not even heard the cries and protests of the people for the location of shops.

(1) Government to determine shops.
(2) Fixed selling price.
(3) Supply by coupon system.
(4) Maintenance of registers.
(5) Age limit 20.
(6) Hours.
(7) Location of shops at the farther end of towns and in decreasing arithmetic proportion.

ORAL EVIDENCE.

" Dr. BHOOPATKAR replied to the President :—" *Bala Golis* are composed of opium and some other carminatives in order to prevent constipation, but the opium does cause injury to the children as it is in a larger proportion, and these children succumb to diseases of the respiratory system and death very easily as their vitality is low.

" There are instances in which people who have been addicted to drink have given it up; people in jail do it, and I do not see why under prohibition people should not do the same although there may be a little suffering for them in the beginning.

" The problem of illicit distillation assumes an entirely different aspect under prohibition. You can under prohibition bring it easily under control, because you know that a thing is prohibited, and this will be quite possible with a little increase in the present excise establishment.

" Some concession may be made in favour of Europeans by means of the coupon system, by allowing them about 2 ounces each in sealed bottles, if the absence of such concessions is likely to jeopardise the whole scheme.

" If, as a result of prohibition, people go in for other imported articles out of their savings, and the Government of India benefit, that Government may be asked to contribute something to the provincial Government.

" I would suggest a terminal tax on hides, wool, wheat, cotton and all other exports, the municipality to be the agency to collect the tax.

" Although the number of shops has decreased and the duty has been increased, liquor consumption has increased, even having regard to the increase in population. "

To Dr. Patil:—" I consider that alcohol is a protoplasmic poison and that it creates a craving for increasing doses. I do not believe that it is a prophylactic against plague and cholera.

" I am in favour of subsidising temperance associations and of introducing temperance teaching in schools and colleges.

" I am not for the o ff system. Shops should be located in out-of-the-way places.

" If we have an advisory committee it must be composed of representatives of the people and they must be given a determining voice on the question of closing or opening shops, hours of sale, etc. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I would have the committee elected on the same basis as municipalities, and not on a communal basis. "

To Dr. Patil.—" I think it is advisable to levy heavy fines on people who drink heavily and also on people who supply drink to those who get excessively drunk. Also illicit distillation should be heavily penalised. "

No. 114.

REPLIES OF MR. C. CLIFFORD,* SUPERINTENDENT OF SALT AND EXCISE IN SIND.

1. Superintendent of Salt and Excise in Sind. I have served as an Excise officer in various parts of the Presidency for about 16 years.

2. (*a*) I consider the policy outlined in the letter of the Government of India quoted to be a sound one.

(*b*) I feel some doubt as to what is meant by an *effective* check. A check which is not effective is not a check at all. The measures by which the Excise policy of Government has expressed itself during the last twenty years have undoubtedly imposed a check upon the consumption of intoxicants, and upon intemperance. Concurrently with the application of these measures, influences have been at work which have counteracted them. These influences are connected with the growth of trade and industries, the movement of the population towards the large towns, the increased earnings of the agricultural and artisan classes, improved communications, leading to much more intercourse than formerly between town and country, and the weakening of the old family, social and religious restraints. As the result of these influences there has been a steady tendency towards more indulgence, and, in the big towns, and among certain communities, more insobriety. On this tendency the Excise measures of Government have certainly placed a check, though the net effect of the tendency and check has been, it must be confessed, an increase in both consumption and intemperance.

3. The policy is all right. Its goal is a step short of prohibition. It aims at making liquor as expensive and as difficult to get as, considering all the circumstances, is possible. I am in favour of prohibition, but not in this country at this time; not until the masses have attained political understanding, are capable of forming opinions on public matters and of giving free expression to them, and generally are able to manage their own affairs. That time is not yet, and until it arrives I advocate no change of policy. Without the support of public opinion administrative action can never hope to eradicate intemperance. There is no public opinion, to speak of, on the drink question at present, but we may safely rely upon the spread of education and general enlightenment to stimulate the growth of one, and to induce the classes chiefly affected to take an intelligent interest in a matter which vitally affects their welfare. I am not in favour of further interfering with the liberty of the individual until Government is in a position to satisfy itself that such interference is endorsed by the majority of the people. In the meantime, progress can be made by applying the existing policy more thoroughly and conscientiously.

(*For suggestions see my reply to question 12.*)

4. For the reasons given in the previous answer I think it is too early to talk of prohibition in India. Further, I consider that if these reasons did not exist, prohibition would be impracticable at present. It would be, as pointed out by the Chief Secretary to Government, an extremely expensive measure. But assuming that the financial difficulty could be overcome, prohibition over the major part of the Presidency could not be effective, even approximately owing to the abundance of cheap material for illicit distillation (mhowra and toddy chiefly) and of natural facilities for evading the law. Attempts to enforce it would produce widespread discontent and resentment. Government would gain the approbation of a very small minority, and still further alienate the goodwill of the masses.

5. See reply to previous question.

6. There is much force in the argument, when applied to countries where the enforcement of prohibition is practicable. Here it is not; at present at any rate.

7. If I considered that this should be the aim of our policy (I do not, for the reasons given) I could suggest no other means of endeavouring to attain it than prohibitive legislation.

8. See reply to question 4.

9. The drink problem is one which confronts the whole of India including the Indian States, and its treatment as an all-India question will make the path of progress easier. Any measures taken to discourage consumption in this Presidency can only be partially successful, must be much more difficult to enforce, and must involve a considerable waste of revenue, unless the adjacent provinces and States fall into line. My first suggestion is that steps be taken to secure joint consideration of excise questions and joint action by the various administrations throughout India, and the co-operation of the Indian States. I suggest a standing excise Committee on which all British provinces and Indian States should be represented. The Committee would meet annually towards the close of the financial year, would consider the proposals of each local Government and State for the next year, correlate and harmonise them, and draw up an excise programme for the whole of India for the ensuing year. The decisions of this Committee need not have the force of executive orders. If the provinces and States represented on it agree to abide by its decisions loyally, excise administration will lose much of its complexity and the task of combating the drink evil will be shorn of some of its difficulties.

* This witness could not attend for oral evidence.

I would annually reduce the number of shops (at such rate as to close them all in 5 years) in areas where there is no danger of illicit practices on a serious scale ensuing, for instance, where the demand is feeble and where there are no facilities for illicit manufacture. This might be done over greater part of Sind (though it would first be necessary to strengthen the preventive establishments there), in Ahmednagar District, and in the west of Ahmedabad District. There are probably other parts of the Presidency where, as in the areas mentioned, the use of strong liquors is not general among the population, but is confined chiefly to the immediate vicinity of the liquor shops, and where there is reason to believe that the demand has been created by the supply. But I should certainly not recommend this step unless an understanding had been arrived at with neighbouring provinces and States for the taking of similar measures across the border.

I would abolish sale for consumption on the premises, both of foreign and country liquors. My experience has convinced me that 90 per cent. of the intemperance which exists is due to the temptations offered by the bars and 'on' shops. I would authorise sale for removal only. I am certain that the result would be an enormous drop in consumption, particularly in the big towns, and a notable decline in drunkenness. The objections usually made to this proposal are that it might lead to—

(1) much more domestic consumption of country spirit than at present exists. To this I would answer that the total consumption would assuredly decrease ;

(2) the familiarisation of women and children with the drink habit who at present never see liquor. I do not think that this view is held by those who have had much acquaintance with the drink traffic and the drinking classes. As a rule the frequenters of the liquor shops are from classes which do not regard the drink habit as reprehensible, and among whom home consumption is common. Exceptions are the Mahomedans among whom the drink habit has made considerable progress of recent years. Upon these the influence of religious injunction, and the opinion of their neighbours and families would I believe be sufficient to deter them from taking liquor to their homes. In any case it seems to me that the frequent appearance of the breadwinner of a family disgustingly drunk and with the bulk of his earnings gone must be more demoralising to his dependents than the presence of a bottle of spirit in the house.

I would continue to lower the maximum strength of spirit and increase the taxation. As regards the strength I should aim at getting it down to 60 U. P. everywhere in the course of the next five years. Care would have to be taken to raise the taxation on foreign liquors *pari passu* with that on country liquors so that there should be no temptation to substitute the imported for the home made article.

I would levy the taxation on country spirit entirely through the still-head duty, abolishing the auctions of licenses. The liquor vendor would be practically a commission agent, selling spirit in quart and pint bottles, the bottles being filled and sealed either at the Distillery or Bonded Warehouse, or elsewhere under excise supervision, and the vendor being paid a fixed remuneration. In the big towns I would prohibit the sale of liquor (foreign and country) except between the hours of 5 and 9 p.m. daily. I should not interfere with the existing hours of sale at mofussil country spirit shops. These would exist only where illicit liquor must be supplied to prevent the growth of an unmanageable illicit traffic, and as each shop would cater for a large area, there must be reasonable facilities for the supply of distant villages.

I would insist upon the carrying out everywhere of the existing orders of Government that liquor shops should not be so located as to become sources of temptation to passers-by. The difficulty at present experienced of finding fresh sites for shops which are objectionably situated would largely disappear if 'on' sale is abolished.

10. (*a*) I am not in favour of the rationing system. It cannot be effective in areas where the demand is strong and opportunities of obtaining illicit liquor abound, but will lead to illicit practices on a scale the preventive establishment will be unable to cope with, and to a useless waste of revenue. Further, the rationing of country spirit shops would lead to increased consumption of foreign liquors especially in the large towns, and it is not desirable that this should take place. It is true that foreign liquor shops might also be rationed. But I doubt if this measure would command the assent of a majority of the classes which ordinarily use foreign liquors, and unless it did I should not recommend it.

(*b*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*) and (*f*) See reply to question 9.

(*g*) See reply to 10 (*a*) above.

All that I consider necessary in respect of foreign liquors is to keep the taxation high and to prohibit sale for consumption on the premises. I would levy the taxation on foreign liquors through the Tariff duty, reducing license fees to the proportions of Registration fees, raising the Tariff duty, and asking the Central Government to allot to each Province a share of its realisations from this source to compensate them for the loss of the liquor fees. The present method of assessing the license fees on foreign liquor shops I regard as very unsatisfactory, involving too much interference with the trade and with the public, and adding to the difficulty of protecting the revenue. The task of extracting from vendors a portion of their profits should be left to the Income Tax Collector.

11. No: not until the masses have learned to think for themselves, and a genuine public opinion on excise questions comes into existence.

12. No. I should prefer to trust these powers, and even larger powers, to a special body (see reply to next question) the decisions of which should be subject to the approval of Government. I do not wish to question the capacity of the various bodies mentioned in the question to exercise these powers discreetly, but I favour concerted action throughout the Presidency, and if possible throughout India, rather than the independent action of a number of local bodies which would probably hold divergent views on excise matters, and possibly views which might conflict with, rather than further, our excise policy.

13. Not of much use. The Collectors would have followed very much the same course without their advice as a rule. The members realised this, I think, and generally speaking took only a languid interest in the proceedings. I find no fault with the constitution of these committees, but I do not think that the gentlemen who served on them can be induced to devote more attention to the drink problem than they do at present, nor that the Committees can be of much use, unless their powers and responsibilities are increased and the members feel that their time and energy is being usefully employed. I would convert these Advisory Committees into Local Licensing Boards (one for each district and each municipal area) whose decisions should be subject only to the approval of Government. I would entrust to them not only the power of determining the number and location of shops in the areas allotted to them but the selection of licensees and the fixing of fees (as I have suggested in my reply to questions 9 and 10 auctions and big license fees should disappear, and Government should depend for its Excise revenue on the duty), the hours of sale, and the conditions of the license generally. The Collector would be the President of each licensing board in his district but I would relieve him of the functions of Collector of Excise Revenue. A body which has met to consider what measures can be taken to discourage the consumption of intoxicants cannot be expected to have much confidence in a Chairman one of whose duties is to realise the largest revenue possible out of the drink traffic. If the Advisory Committees, or the Boards I propose to substitute for them, are to take themselves seriously, the chief Excise authority of the district should no longer preside over them. I would leave the collection of the Excise revenue to the Excise Department, relieve the Collector of all responsibility connected therewith, and give the Boards a President whose impartiality would not be open to doubt. The Licensing Boards would be required to consider the views and objections of the local Excise officers before deciding upon any course of action likely to affect the revenue and, as at present, the Excise Department could place its views before Government on any matter in which the decision of the Board appeared to be unsound. I believe a Board with functions of this kind would attract able men, and would prove a useful agency for regulating the drink traffic, and carrying into execution the moral side of the excise policy of Government. With reference to the latter portion of question 12 I would not make these Boards responsible for raising any part of the revenue that might be sacrificed as the result of the exercise of their powers. It is not right that they should be shackled by such a condition. A decline in our excise revenue must be faced. Government could veto any proposal of a Licensing Board which promised a loss in revenue without any advantage on the moral side.

14. Undoubtedly.

15. As consumption declines, the money now spent on drink will become more and more available for spending in other directions; and other revenues will benefit. The realisations from luxury taxes will improve (I would increase these taxes if necessary). Also the railway and postal revenues. These are, of course, Imperial revenues at present, but I certainly think that any serious falling off in the excise revenue ought to mean a fresh allocation of Imperial and Provincial revenues. Military expenditure could be reduced in my opinion without affecting the number and efficiency of our combatant forces. If this is done, opposition to the increase of the salt tax will probably disappear. It should be possible to make a substantial revenue out of country tobacco. I have not recommended prohibition and I do not anticipate the extinction of our excise revenue for many years to come; but there would be a considerable decline in the revenue if the measures I advocate were carried out. The less the people waste in drink the more taxable will they become in other directions.

16. I am against prohibition for reasons similar to those given in my reply to question 4. Very severe restrictions exist on the traffic in opium and drugs. My observation leads me to believe that in British territory, at any rate, the opium eating habit is on the decline. The bulk of the opium now consumed is used medicinally or as a soporific for children. I do not think that we need do any more than continue to raise the duty on opium and hemp drugs, introduce such further restrictions on sale and possession as may from time to time appear feasible, and leave the rest to the spread of education and the growth of public opinion.

17. The custom is general among the labouring classes in the Presidency proper.

I am not in a position to answer the second part of the question.

No. A—1317.

From

C. CLIFFORD, ESQUIRE,
Assistant Collector of Salt and Excise,
Ahmedabad Sub-Division;

To

THE COLLECTOR OF AHMEDABAD.

*Ahmedabad, 7th May 1919.*

Sir,

I have the honour to address you on the subject of the drink traffic in Ahmedabad City, a subject which has some bearing, I believe, on the existing unrest and the recent outburst of lawlessness and violence.

2. I will trouble you as little as possible with statistics. Facts of common knowledge are sufficient for my purpose.

3. Forty years ago the mill industry was in its infancy here, and the compiler of the Bombay Gazetteer wrote of this district:—

"Unlike the southern districts of Gujerat, liquor is little used."

The mill industry has since then grown to maturity, and side by side with it has grown the taste for strong drink, until it has attained the proportions of a social evil of the first magnitude. The vice of intemperance is not widespread in this district. It is confined to certain localities—Ahmedabad and other industrial centres—and to certain sections of the population. The drink problem is or ought to be a proportionately less difficult one to deal with here than in most parts of the Presidency where addiction to drink is traditional and more or less universal. To four-fifths of the population of this city the remark I have quoted might still be truthfully applied; of the havoc wrought by intemperance among the remainder—and among the mill-hands in particular, upon whose efficiency the prosperity of the city largely depends—the annual returns convey a very inadequate idea. The mill-hands form about one-seventh of the population of the city; they account for upwards of three-fourths of the country spirit consumed. There are steady sober men among them, but of the mill-hand generally it may be said that he goes straight from the pay-office to the liquor shop, squanders in a day or two the earnings of a fortnight, pays for his liquor in cash, gets his grain and the other necessaries of life on credit, and within a day or two after one pay day is applying for advances to carry him on to the next. His earnings are good, ranging from Rs. 15 per mensem, the minimum wage of spinners, to Rs. 40 and 45, wages commonly earned by weavers (see memorandum attached); and his wife and the able-bodied among his children are usually earners too. Yet the standard of living and the economic condition generally of this class are that of the casual and unskilled labouring classes in times when work is scarce and ill-paid. Extreme poverty and indebtedness are common, and the mill-hand's outlook on life may be said to be bounded by the factory and the grog-shop. I do not assert that he is more depraved than is the mill-hand of other large manufacturing towns, or that his lot is worse; but comparing his condition with that of the agricultural classes from which he is recruited, and remembering that he is sprung from a naturally abstemious stock, I cannot help thinking that he has fallen farther. It would be unprofitable, here, to enquire into the causes which have led to this state of things. I have little doubt that administrative want of foresight of years ago played its part and that administrative courage is now capable of supplying a remedy. This is practically what your letter No. X. C. L., dated 15th February 1919, to the Commissioner of Customs, Salt and Excise admits and suggests respectively, and my object in approaching you now is to shew that reasons exist for taking stronger action than you therein proposed, and for taking that action at once.

4. The measures so far taken to grapple with intemperance, though laudable in intention, have failed in effect. The raising of the price of liquor has been the chief weapon relied upon. Well, we have raised prices in this city till country spirit is almost as expensive as the imported article and the effect on consumption among the mill-hands has been *nil*. That is the opinion not only of Excise officers, but of the employers and others who come in contact with them at their work, and in their private lives. War and famine in 1918-19 pushed up the prices of the necessaries of life to unprecedented figures; as the result of an administrative change, the price of country spirit was more than doubled. A big drop in consumption admittedly took place. The sale of the higher strength of spirit fell from 69,480 gallons to 55,835 gallons, and that of the lower and cheaper strength rose from 62,020 to 66,164 gallons, a net decline of about 14½ per cent. in terms of L. P. Now from the information at my disposal I am not in a position to say with confidence that the falling off was confined to this or that particular class of consumer, but the blunt fact remains that intemperance and drunkenness among the mill-hands was never

more in evidence than during the year 1918-19. They obtained a rise or wages varying from 35 to 50 per cent. and their increased earnings went to the liquor shops. Moreover, we know from past experience that from checks imposed by high prices consumption has a habit of recovering, and it is not certain that the present high prices will be maintained after the expiry of the current contracts. I have little hope that the raising of the prices, short of carrying them to an absolutely prohibitive figure which for several reasons is impracticable, will produce much impression upon the drink habit among the mill-hands.

We have reduced the number of licensed shops with the results that the custom of those closed has gone to the surviving shops, which have become centres of rowdiness and disorder, and a nuisance to their neighbourhood.

We have curtailed the hours of sale, and by doing so have added to the vendors' opportunities for fleecing his customers, besides, as there is good reason to fear, intensifying the evil against which the measure was directed. In the rush which takes place between mill-closing and shop-closing hours the customer has to take what is given to him which is scandalously short measure ; he gulps down hurriedly what he formerly drank by instalments and at leisure ; and drunkenness on the streets is commoner than ever it was.

We are likely to have no better success with any measure which stops short of the absolute removal of the source of the evil, the shops where consumption in the premises is permitted.

5. Remembering the particular attention paid to their class of recent years by the political agitator it is not surprising to find that the mill-hands have added to their taste for strong drink a taste for mischief. The combination is a sinister one. Whatever may be the explanation of the violent temper of the mob during the recent outbreak and the particular directions in which it manifested itself, I think we ought to number among its predisposing causes the poverty and misery wrought among the labouring classes by excessive indulgence in liquor. The discontent and irritability engendered thereby, accentuated this year by the rise in prices, prepared the ground for the political mischief-maker. It appears clear that the attacks on country liquor shops were preconcerted in the same manner as were those on Government buildings. The destruction of the contents of the shops was carried out methodically, and simultaneously in places far apart ; care being taken not to fire buildings where there was danger of injuring adjoining private property. The country liquor shops had been marked down either as centres from which, like the Revenue offices, Magistrates' courts and police chowkies, bureaucratic oppression radiated, or as the property of persons against whom the rioter had a special grievance. Certain it is that our liquor vend arrangements during 1918-19 had given rise to a feeling of intense dissatisfaction among consumers generally and the mill-hands in particular. The consumer takes the restrictions placed upon the liquor traffic by Government from time to time with a good grace. That is my experience during 20 years of service. When Government raises the selling rates, he acquiesces quietly, makes no grievance of the increase ; but if he fancies that he is being cheated by the shop-keeper we hear from him. Excise supervision in the past has placed some sort of check on the rapacity of the vendors and kept prices down to within reasonable distance of those sanctioned by Government. In 1918-19 the price of country spirit suddenly leapt from Rs. 1-2-0 to Rs. 2-8-0 per bottle in the case of 30° U. P. spirit and from Re. 0-9-0 to Rs. 1-4-0 per bottle of 60° U. P. spirit. This was a staggering increase to the class which finds its chief relaxation in the liquor shop, but it caused much less outcry than the barefaced cheating by the shop-keepers which accompanied it. Remonstrances were useless ; the shop-keeper placed the blame on the high fees levied by Government ; the Excise officer could only meet complaints with a sympathetic 'non possumus'. Widespread resentment among consumers and vilification of a Government which had left them to the tender mercies of the liquor contractor followed. The singling out of the liquor shops for attention during the recent riots has, then, a significance it would not otherwise have had. I think we should take the hint which it seems to me to convey.

When the liquor shops begin to play a part in bringing Government into contempt, undermining respect for authority, and promoting disorder and violence it is time to abolish them.

6. I fear that it is not among the labouring classes alone that the existence of the liquor shops is exercising a pernicious influence. At this juncture it is more than ordinarily essential that in no department of its policy should the good faith of Government be open to challenge. No one who does not deliberately close his eyes to facts will deny that among the public there is a feeling of scepticism with regard to the attitude of Government towards intemperance. In this city in particular, setting aside the opinion of the coterie of malcontents who see something sinister behind everything that Government undertakes, it is my experience that among the thinking classes the impression prevails that Government is lukewarm in its treatment of a grave social evil, and that the explanation of this lukewarmness is a reluctance to sacrifice revenue ; that in spite of oft repeated expressions—in Council, in Government Resolutions, and in replies to deputations—of their abhorrence of the vice of intemperance and their determination to adopt all practicable means of combating it, Government only move in the matter in response to outside pressure ; and that there comes a point where pressure is unavailing and revenue considerations appear to weigh more with Government than the moral and material

improvement of the people. Whether more than a handful of the leading men of this city take the degradation of the labouring classes deeply to heart is doubtful; but there are many among the well-wishers of Government who compare the pronouncements of Government with the visible effects of its policy or what they judge to be its effects, and who discern a disparity between promise and performance. At attempts to correct this impression they smile ironically; they point to the liquor shops thriving—in spite of the orders of high authority to which the attention of temperance deputations and enquiring members of the Legislative Council is from time to time directed—on the main thoroughfares of the city; drunkenness spreading, the condition of the labouring classes deteriorating, and the Excise revenue annually increasing. Among those in this city who take an intelligent interest in public affairs, whose mental attitude on public questions is devoid of passion, partiality or prejudice, there is a tendency—and it is an unpleasant thing to contemplate—to regard official assurances on the drink question as cant, and official effort as humbug. So long as the country liquor shops exist in this city, on their present footing at any rate,—so long will they be cited by the better classes as a reproach to the administration, as a testimony to official insincerity; so long will they continue to be agencies for the spread among the lower classes of poverty, vice and that state of discontent in which the seeds of sedition thrive.

7. The country liquor shops have been closed for nearly one month. I recommend that they should remain closed. I do not propose to convert Ahmedabad into a "dry" city. I would remove the temptation to drink but not, for the present, the opportunity, though I should circumscribe the latter. I am not unmindful of the danger of encouraging the traffic in illicit liquor, nor of the futility of attempting to coerce the people into abstinence. I propose that for the 'on' shops closed we substitute three (or more if you deem fit) 'off' shops licensed on the same lines as the foreign liquor 'off' shops. Nor do I underestimate the force of the arguments which have been urged against this method of vend. It has been tried on the continent and in some states of America, and though on the whole its effects have been beneficial, it has been accused of (1) encouraging home tippling, and the spread of the drink habit by bringing people into contact with liquor and its seductions who would otherwise have escaped contamination, and (2) promoting the growth of an unlicensed trade in spirits. It is of no use blinking the fact that the closure of the retail shops may lead to a certain amount of unlicensed sale of duty-paid liquor. The mill-hand drinks gregariously and he will find no difficulty, as a rule, in getting some one to join him in the purchase of a pint of liquor. But among other classes of consumers it will frequently happen that inability or unwillingness to purchase a bottle will leave a man no alternative to going without altogether. The danger is that unlicensed businesses like the 'kevats' of Khandesh may spring up to cater for the demand of this class of consumer. I have given this point very careful consideration and have made fairly extensive enquiries on the subject among consumers. The class which is inveterately wedded to the drink habit is a small one comprising chiefly the Wagris, and immigrant Maharattas, Kolies and Dheds. With the great majority of consumers the habit is a recently acquired one. There is no hereditary propensity towards drink, no irrepressible craving for it. Climate and, generally speaking, race are against the habit; causes adventitious—environment, association and temptation—are responsible for it. The Thakarda or the Dhed who has never earned more than a few annas a day in his native village, and has never worried about liquor except on the occasion of marriages and big festivals, comes to work at a mill; finds himself earning 12 annas a day and upwards, and with a novel superfluity of cash on pay-day; there probably does not exist a city so ill-provided as Ahmedabad with means of healthy recreation for the lower classes; human nature asks for something more than work, food and sleep; and he easily adopts the notions of enjoyment prevalent among his new associates. If the disappearance of the licensed dram-shop means the cutting off of the supply of spirit altogether to members of these classes, I anticipate that they will find no great difficulty in doing without it; nor will the Mahomedan factory hands, among whom, owing to their contact with the classes which frequent the liquor shops, the drink habit has made great strides, in spite of religious prohibition. I feel confident that the proposed 'off' shops will suffice to meet all but a small fraction of the demand for country spirit which will survive the closure of the 'on' shops; and that this department will be able to cope with any illicit trade which may arise, and keep it down to insignificant proportions.

8. Nor is there in my opinion much fear of home consumption leading to the spread of the drink habit. Thakardas, Kolies, Dheds and Mahomedans, with a sprinkling of Marwadis, Wagris, Ravals and Bhavsars, are the castes we find frequenting the liquor shops. We may regard it as certain that the Mahomedan will not take liquor home with him. It would lead to trouble with his family, if not with his 'moholla'. He has some respect for the opinion of his community. Among a minority of the lower class Mahomedans who through relations with the women of other races, or for other reasons, have become renegades to their religion, the drink habit may linger; but nine-tenths of the consumption among Mahomedans will cease with the closure of the shops. Among the other classes I have mentioned, the consumption of liquor at home will be no new thing. However, the point is an important one. It will be safer to obtain the opinion of people more qualified to speak on the subject than I am, who come more in contact with the labouring classes and have a longer and closer acquaintance with their personal

habits than I have. The system of vend I propose is not of course a novel one. It has been tried in some of the States of America, and on the Continent. In fact a similar system is in force at present in South Carolina, and it will be useful to examine its results in a city in which the conditions somewhat resemble those obtaining in Ahmedabad. South Carolina is a cotton growing State, and Columbia, its capital, is the chief seat of its cotton manufacture. It has a population of about 30,000 of which nearly one-half are negroes. The mill operatives are chiefly blacks and it was the excessive consumption of spirit among them which led to the introduction of the system I have alluded to. Liquor is sold in establishments under public management known as dispensaries. Consumption on the premises is prohibited. The dispensaries are few, open on week days only, and close at sunset. Spirit is sold only in bottles, in not less quantities than half a pint, and must be taken away. I am quoting from the description of the system given by Dr. Arthur Shadwell, author of "Drink Temperance and Legislation" and other works, a man eminent in medical circles at home and an authority on Continental and colonial liquor laws. Now Dr. Shadwell represents a school of thought opposed to that of which the late Sir Victor Horsley, another brilliant member of the same profession, was one of the foremost exponents. Dr. Shadwell disapproves of the tendency of public opinion towards a general condemnation of the use of alcohol; and towards what he considers a fanatical stringency in the regulation of the drink traffic. He may be regarded as the champion of the moderate drinker. In criticising the results of legislative efforts in various parts of the world to discourage intemperance he faithfully records public opinion upon them; but he frequently finds reasons to disagree with it. By which opinion we should be guided in the case of the South Carolina experiment, I leave you to judge. In Columbia itself there was

> "a consensus of testimony to the effect of the system in improving public order among the coloured population who are very susceptible to drink."

Dr. Shadwell says that he visited Columbia and Charleston, in which the same system is in force, and found both places honeycomed with illicit drink shops. I for one suspect that Dr. Shadwell's views have led him into exaggeration here, but I should imagine that the Columbia authorities would probably be faced with difficulties we are not likely to encounter in Ahmedabad. The white population of Columbia is more than 50 per cent. of the whole. Among the white races the taste for strong drinks is inborn and stubborn; the public-house has been an institution among them for centuries past. It was probably their resistance to the innovation which led to the results of which Dr. Shadwell speaks. Where the Gothenburg system is in force, *i.e.*, in Sweden and some parts of Norway, drinking saloons and bars have practically been abolished and consumption on the premises is confined to refreshment rooms, under what is known as disinterested company management, the profits being divided between the state and the municipality; spirit is served only with solid refreshments. I give statistics of the consumption of spirit in both countries taken from the Board of Trade Returns :—

*Per capita consumption in gallons.*

| | 1900 | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 to 1908 | 1909 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Norway .. .. | 0·64 | 0·64 | 0·64 | 0·62 | 0·62 | 0·51 | Not available .. | 0·64 |
| Sweden .. .. | 1·67 | 1·65 | 1·52 | 1·43 | 1·34 | 1·36 | Do. .. | 1·14 |

I have no figures later than 1909. The decline in consumption between 1900 and 1905 in Norway is partially attributed, I believe, to the heavy emigration which took place to the United States during those years, while the enormous development of the tourist traffic since 1905 accounts to some extent for the movement in the other direction. However, the Gothenburg system has only been partially adopted in Norway, where it was in force in 32 towns only in 1906, as against 101 towns in Sweden. It is to the figures for the latter country, which has had 54 years' experience of the system and where it is practically universal, that we may turn for some idea of its effects on consumption. Dr. Shadwell says of the Gothenburg system there, after enumerating its beneficial effects, that the restrictions on the sale for consumption on the premises have stimulated the retail bottle trade and home drinking. This is an obviously natural result. What it is more important to know is that consumption is on the decline since those restrictions were imposed. The only argument I am inclined to base on the results of Swedish experience, however, is that in proposing the closure of the Ahmedabad shops I am not recommending a leap in the dark. Russia in 1895 introduced a similar system to that of South Carolina. Retail sale was confined to Government shops, which were allowed to sell only in sealed bottles, for consumption off the premises. At only a few high class restaurants was spirit allowed to be sold by the glass. The system continued until shortly after the outbreak of war, when prohibition was introduced. It does not appear to have produced much effect on the consumption of spirit judging from the statistics, but deductions from this as to its efficacy or otherwise would be unsafe. The drink problem among white races and in cold climates is on a different footing to that with which we have to deal. It has this common feature everywhere, though,

that complete success is not to be expected from any method of treating it. You will have noticed from the papers that prohibition comes into force throughout the United States of America next year, but even its most enthusiastic supporters do not claim that it is going to abolish the drink habit; their position is that consumption of spirit will be reduced to inconsiderable proportions by the placing of obstacles in the way of getting it; that the advantages of a measure to which there admittedly exist powerful objections will immeasurably outweigh the disadvantages. That I submit is a reasonable view to take of this proposal to close the Ahmedabad liquor shops.

9. In taking this step Government will have public opinion on its side, the opinion in particular of those who have it in their power to sway the minds of the lower classes in this city. I do not know how far we can rely upon the political, religious and social leaders of the people to give their active co-operation in dealing with the drink evil, which will not, of course, disappear with the closure of the shops. They could certainly be helpful, if so inclined, in exerting themselves to restore the old influences of caste and religious injunction, and social disapprobation. From one important class, however, co-operation of the most practical kind may be expected. I refer to the mill-owners, who have an immediate interest in the improvement of the economic condition of their employés. If the closure of the shops is to achieve its object, some substitute for them must be provided, some place to which the mill-hand may go for the relaxation which mind and body clamour for after a day's toil in the depressing atmosphere of the factory. I believe that the mill-owners will readily give their financial support to any scheme to this end which may be found practicable, and the municipality and such bodies as the Temperance Association and the Salvation Army may also be relied upon for active assistance. The mill-hand is fond of singing and music; fond of the cinema; will listen to the professional story-teller for hours together. If places are provided at which he can get entertainment of this kind, with temperance bars in attractive and commodious buildings in and about which he can sit and gossip, it will be found that he will not miss the 'on' shop and his patronage of the 'off' shop will decline. I should like to see the open space on which stands, or rather stood, the Panchkuwa liquor shop handed over to some philanthropic body, the Salvation Army, say, for an experiment of this kind. I suggest that the Mill owners' Association, the municipality, the Excise Advisory Committee, the Ahmedabad Temperance Association, the Salvation Army and any other public bodies likely to be interested in this question of providing counter-attractions to the liquor shops, be consulted on the subject. In fact it would perhaps be better to consult them on the whole proposal before taking any steps, keeping the shops closed, as an emergency measure, until a decision is reached. You may also, perhaps, think it advisable to ascertain the views on the proposed change of the class most vitally affected, the mill-hands. This might be done through their employers. I have made fairly extensive enquiries among the mill-hands, and believe that all but a small minority will welcome the disappearance of the shops.

10. The foreign liquor refreshment rooms, of which there are two in the city, should, in my opinion, share the fate of the country liquor shops. They are frequented by the same classes and share the responsibility for the increasing insobriety among the mill-hands. The abolition of the country spirit 'on' shop will certainly be ineffective so long as the foreign liquor refreshment rooms remain. What will happen may be inferred from the jump in the sales at the latter since 11th April when the country liquor shops were closed. The sales for March and April respectively were :—

| | Sale in gallons. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Fermented liquors. | Wines and liquors. | Spirits. |
| March 1919 .. .. .. | 163 | 39 | 594 |
| April 1919 .. .. .. | 448 | 28 | 1,174 |

These establishments are bars, nothing more nor less; have no right to the description of refreshment rooms, for the only refreshments sold are intoxicating liquors. They exist, it seems to me, in contravention of very distinct orders of Government, see paragraph 278 of the Excise Manual, Volume I.

11. The closure of the Ahmedabad city liquor shops, in which I should include the Sabarmati and Camp shops, would be attended by no great departmental difficulties. You have the power to terminate the current liquor contracts under section 32A of the Abkari Act. The license fees for the unexpired portion of the year would be returned to the licensees. Compensation to the two rival groups interested in the city shops could take the form of the issue of an 'off' license to each. The Ahmedabad Camp licensee might be similarly compensated. There should be no question of compensating the Rajpur and Sabarmati licensees, for these two men—

brothers—are burdened with contracts which threaten them with ruin. The following were their license fees and sales during 1918-19 :—

| Name of shop. | Annual license fee (1918-19, 1919-20, 1920-21). | Sale, 1918-19. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 30° U.P. | 60° U.P. |
| | Rs. | Gallons. | Gallons. |
| Rajpur .. .. .. | 15,100 | 495 | 2,743 |
| Sabarmati .. .. .. | 7,000 | 1,338 | 171 |

They have applied for relief, and could have no grievance if their shops were closed.

The two foreign liquor refreshment rooms, to avoid hardship to the licensees in whose families the licenses have been for years, could be converted into 'off' shops.

The number and location of the 'off' shops to be substituted for the present shops is a matter which may be fitly decided in consultation with the Excise Advisory Committee. Spirit would be issued from the Ahmedabad country liquor warehouse and sold, by the quart (= 8 drams) and pint (= 4 drams)bottle, the price being fixed by Government, and one of the two strengths being coloured to prevent fraud. I have consulted the country liquor Warehouse Inspector on the subject and he anticipates no difficulty in connection with the new method of issue. An allowance per gallon to cover the cost of the bottles and the labour and material expended in bottling and sealing would have to be added to the supply price. Bottles are obtainable in the market at Rs. 1-8-0 per dozen, and the Warehouse Inspector estimates that the extra cost of bottling would be Re. 1-0-0 per gallon, which is the allowance at present made in the case of masala spirit. The empty bottles would of course be repurchased from the customers or could be sold by the latter in the bazaar, so that the net increase in the supply price would be about As. 4 per gallon, and against that we have to put the saving in dryage and interest on capital invested in storage vats and transport casks. Exactly what addition should be made to the supply price would, of course, be a matter to be settled by the Commissioner of Customs, Salt and Excise after his sanction had been obtained to the new method of vend, as would be the fixing of the selling price and the fees at which the 'off' country spirit shops should be licensed.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. CLIFFORD,

Assistant Collector of Salt and Excise,
Ahmedabad Sub-Division.

*Average monthly earnings at the Bechardas Spinning and Weaving Mills.*

Spinning Department.

| Class. | Blow Room. | Card Room. | Frames. | Rings. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| Head jobbers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | 44 |
| Jobbers .. .. | 24 | 36 | 60 | ... |
| Doffers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | 21 |
| Oilers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | 20 |
| Piecers (men and women) .. | .. | .. | .. | 17 |
| Men .. .. | 17 | 15 | 20 | .. |
| Juvenile doffers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | 11 |

Weaving Department.

| Class. | Winding. | Warping. | Sizing. | Drawing. | Weaving. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| Jobbers .. .. | 29 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Women (chiefly) and men .. | 17 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Men .. .. | .. | 45 | 45 | .. | .. |
| Back sizers .. .. | .. | .. | 22½ | .. | .. |
| Size mixers .. .. | .. | .. | 18 | .. | .. |
| Men .. .. | .. | .. | .. | 35 | .. |
| Boys .. .. | .. | .. | .. | 12½ | .. |
| Head jobbers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 115 |
| Line jobbers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 90 to 100 |
| Weavers (average for two rooms for a working month of 24 days). | .. | .. | .. | .. | 36 |
| Oilers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 16 |
| Sweepers .. .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 14 |

No. E—167 of 1923.

Sind Salt and Excise Department,
Superintendent's Office,
Karachi, the 30th April/1st May 1923.

From

C. CLIFFORD, ESQUIRE,
Superintendent of Salt and Excise in Sind ;

To

THE SECRETARY,
Excise Committee, Secretariat,
Fort, Bombay.

Sir,

In continuation of this office No. E.—136 dated 26th April 1923, I have the honour to enclose a statement shewing statistics relating to Country liquor for the years 1903-04 to 1921-22 for the Province of Sind.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) C. CLIFFORD,
Superintendent of Salt and Excise in Sind.

*Statistics relating to country spirit for the years 1903-04 to 1921-22 for the Province of Sind.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | 6 | | | | | | | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Consumption. | | Taxation per gallon. | | | Rates of duty on | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Strong spirit, | | | | Weak spirit. | | | |
| Year. | Population. | Gallons L. P. (a). | Per-capita in drams L. P. | Duty (b). | Vend fees (c) (incidence per gallon). | No. of licensed shops. | L.P. to 12° UP | 10° UP | 15° UP | 25° UP | 25° to 28° UP | 35° to 40° UP | 40° UP | Hours of Sale. |
| 1903-04 .. | 32,10,910 | 1,60,322 | 2·4 | 5 1 9 | 0 3 7 | 296 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 2–10 | .. | Not available. |
| 1904-05 .. | 32,10,910 | 1,78,287 | 2·7 | 5 0 2 | 0 3 3 | 291 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 2–10 | .. | |
| 1905-06 .. | 32,10,910 | 1,83,175 | 2·7 | 4 15 8 | 0 3 3 | 292 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 2–10 | .. | |
| 1906-07 .. | 32,10,910 | 1,95,893 | 2·9 | 4 10 8 | 0 3 2 | 298 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 2–10 | .. | |
| 1907-08 .. | 32,10,910 | 2,25,959 | 3·4 | 4 15 6 | 0 2 9 | 293 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 2–10 | .. | |
| 1908-09 .. | 32,10,910 | 2,17,911 | 2·9 | 4 15 9 | 0 2 11 | 280 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 2–10 | .. | |
| 1909-10 .. | 32,10,910 | 2,14,878 | 3·1 | 5 0 3 | 0 2 11 | 266 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 2–10 | .. | |
| 1910-11 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,10,285 | 2·9 | 5 8 7 | 0 5 1 | 255 | .. | 5 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3–4 | |
| 1911-12 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,16,658 | 2·9 | 5 11 9 | 0 10 6 | 255 | .. | 5 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3–4 | |
| 1912-13 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,11,691 | 2·9 | 5 10 11 | 0 12 5 | 249 | .. | 5 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3–4 | |
| 1913-14 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,13,627 | 2·9 | 5 12 9 | 0 14 9 | 243 | .. | 5 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3–4 | |
| 1914-15 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,07,912 | 2·8 | 5 9 4 | 1 0 9 | 226 | .. | 5 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3–4 | 9 a.m. to 10 p. m. |
| 1915-16 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,20,045 | 3·0 | 5 8 9 | 1 1 4 | 215 | .. | 5 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3–4 | Do. |
| 1916-17 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,02,895 | 2·8 | 6 1 1 | 1 5 4 | 207 | .. | .. | 5–4 | .. | .. | .. | 3–8 | Do. |
| 1917-18 .. | 35,13,435 | 1,96,409 | 2·7 | 7 3 9 | 2 6 8 | 194 | .. | .. | 6 | .. | .. | .. | 4 | Do. |
| 1918-19 .. | 35,13,435 | 1,98,162 | 2·7 | 7 4 11 | 2 15 9 | 176 | .. | .. | 6 | .. | .. | .. | 4 | Do. |
| 1919-20 .. | 35,13,435 | 2,16,723 | 2·96 | 7 1 3 | 3 9 8 | 182 | .. | .. | 6 | .. | .. | .. | 4 | 9 a.m. to 12-30 p.m. and 2 pm. to 10 p.m. |
| 1920-21 .. | 32,77,656 | 2,28,223 | 3·34 | 7 0 11 | 4 7 8 | 158 | .. | .. | 6 | .. | .. | .. | 4 | Do. |
| 1921-22 .. | 32,79,377 | 1,35,582 | 1·98 | 9 4 1 | 5 12 4 | 151 | .. | .. | .. | 7 | .. | .. | 4–8 | Do. |

(a) L. P. (London Proof) spirit consists of 49·24 per cent. by weight of alcohol and 50·76 per cent. of water. Specific gravity at 60° F=0·91984.

(b) The rates are shown in column 6. This column gives the incidence per gallon of the total realizations from duty on the sale of all strengths.

(c) Fees paid for privilege of sale. The incidence is obtained by dividing the aggregate of the fees by the number of gallons sold.

No. 115.

## Replies of the EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, Larkana.

1. We are a Committee appointed by the Commissioner in Sind.

2. (*a*) We agree with the policy of Government on the whole. (But see answer to question No. 4.)

(*b*) We find that the use of liquor has increased but do not consider that its abuse has decreased or increased. We think that the number of moderate drinkers has increased but that the number of drunkards has not increased proportionately. We would not say that the actual number of drunkards has decreased.

3. See answer to question no. 4.

4. We favour prohibition because drinking is forbidden by all the religions of India and because, practically, it is uneconomical. On the whole it is better for the health not to drink than to drink. We do not consider it to be an immediately practical measure.

5. (*a*) As we do not advocate immediate prohibition by law. We do not think that people will resort to illicit means.

(*b*) See answer to 5 (*a*).

(*c*) If the habit is abolished gradually such discontent would not arise and it is hoped to attain the end desired by social measures.

(*d*) The question will not arise until there is total prohibition.

(*e*) The probability is not great. People who like liquor do not usually take drugs.

6. We agree with it.

7. Social endeavour to create a strong public opinion, lectures, the establishment of temperance societies, lessons on temperance in school-books. Immediate prohibitive legislation is not desirable but see answers to question 10.

8. Yes.

9. See answers to other questions relative to the same subject.

10. We agree with (*a*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*), (*f*), (*h*), (*j*), (*k*).

With regard to (*b*) we agree that prices should be increased when it can be done without encouraging smuggling or the drinking of foreign liquor, etc. But it should be so arranged that the extra price does not mean extra profit to the licensee.

With regard to (*g*) we consider that the import should be restricted.

With regard to (*i*) we consider that the minimum age limit should be restricted to 21 years.

We would add that liquor should not be sold on certain holidays, to be decided locally.

Liquor should not be sold in quantities of less than half a bottle, as the poor would not be able to buy so much and would not save up to do so.

The shops should not be situated near schools or in very crowded thorough-fares.

11. We are not in favour of it.

12. Local bodies might be entrusted with the powers. They should not be responsible for raising the revenues.

13. Advisory Committees have been found useful, but they ought to be called frequently and consulted in matters of detail. The Local Committee has just been reconstituted.

14. Yes.

15. Our proposals would produce gradual reduction and final extinction of excise revenue and as the reduction progresses other methods of taxation might be devised as the exigency arose. We are not prepared to make definite suggestions.

16. The policy should be the same as for liquor.

17. The practice so far as we know does not obtain in Sind except among Marwaris and in such parts of the Province as border on Marwar. The practice does increase the death-rate.

## No. 116.

### Replies of Mr. A. M. I. UMEDALLY, President, District Local Board, Hyderabad.

1. Zamindar and landlord. I have had no special opportunities.

2. (*a*) The policy is a sound one.

(*b*) But it is unfortunate that instead of any decrease there has been an increase in the consumption of liquor. I do not consider that the policy of Government has put an effective check on intemperance.

3. The best way of minimizing temptation to those who do not drink and of discouraging excess among those who do is to reduce the number of shops and remove them from objectionable places, *viz.*, near mosques, temples, schools or places of public resort, etc.

4. No.

6. I cannot say anything about this.

9. Consumption of liquor can be controlled and reduced by the following means :—

(*a*) Rationing of shops.

(*b*) Reducing the number of shops.

(*c*) Reducing days and hours of sale.

(*d*) Regulating the location of shops.

(*e*) Restricting the importation and sale of foreign liquor.

(*f*) Regulating licenses.

(*g*) Prescribing age-limit for customers.

(*h*) Encouraging temperance work (*1*) by subsidizing temperance associations, (*2*) by including temperance lessons in school text-books and (*3*) by temperance slides in magic lantern shows of the Education Department.

(*i*) Restricting the removal of liquor from shops.

10. (*a*) Each shop should be allowed to sell the quantity of country as well as foreign liquor in a particular year which represents the average for the last three years *minus* 5 per cent.

(*b*) The number of shops in a town or city should be in proportion to its population, about one shop for six thousand. In villages there should be only one shop.

(*c*) Shops should be closed for sale of liquor on Fridays and Sundays and on Hindu and Mahomedan holidays. They should open at 10 a.m. and close at sunset.

(*d*) Shops should not be located near factories, temples, mosques, schools, theatres, gardens, quarters of women of ill-fame and other places of public resort.

(*e*) The importation of foreign liquor may be restricted by increasing duty on it and by reducing the licenses for its retail sale.

(*f*) Licenses should not be issued for localities the inhabitants of which are against their issue.

(*g*) The age-limit for customers of liquor should be raised to 18 years.

(*h*) Temperance work should be encouraged by subsidizing temperance associations in the shape of grants, by including temperance lessons in text-books and by temperance slides in magic lantern shows of the Education Department.

(*i*) Not more than a full bottle should be allowed to be removed from a shop by a person on a particular day.

The other means that I would suggest towards that end are the following :—

(1) Parks and open spaces in towns should be made attractive by music.

(2) The encouragement of the indigenous threatre, circus and cinema.

(3) Out-of-door sports of all kinds, including wrestling.

(4) Magic lantern lectures by social service bodies.

(5) Free reading rooms.

(6) Circulating libraries

(7) Museums.

11. Yes. If 75 per cent. of the voters on the register vote against a shop it should be closed.

12. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) No.

13. No. The advisory committees should consist of two-thirds non-official element. Panchayats, municipalities, temperance associations and local boards should be given representation on them.

14. Yes.

15. I am of opinion that the cost on the excise establishment should be reduced before other sources of income, *e.g.*, tax on motor cars, entertainment tax and tax on tobacco, are explored. The posts of Excise Inspectors of divisions should be abolished. These officers have got very little work to do which can be done by Mukhtiarkars who used to do it before also.

16. I have no remarks to offer in the matter of the use of hemp drugs, but I am of opinion that the use of opium should be restricted by prohibiting its sale to women and to adults under the age of 18 years. The maximum quantity to be sold to a person should still be reduced and it should be laid down that opium should not be sold to a person more than once a day.

17. It is slightly prevalent among backward classes, *e.g.*, Kachis and Marwaris. Deaths from administration of opium are rare.

## No. 117.

REPLIES OF KHAN BAHADUR S. N. BHUTTO, O.B.E., M.L.C., PRESIDENT, DISTRICT LOCAL BOARD, LARKHANA.

1. I am zamindar by profession. But besides being President of the District Local Board, Larkana, I am a First Class Special Magistrate and member of the Legislative Council, Bombay.

2. I am of opinion that the Excise policy of Government as given in the letter quoted is all right. But the actual results of the policy as it has been carried out are not what they should be.

3. So far as the wordings of the policy go no suggestions are needed to improve upon it.

4. I am not in favour of prohibition.

5, 6, 7, 8. Do not require any reply from me.

9 and 10. I have to suggest the following means to control consumption of all kinds of liquors and to gradually reduce it.

(*a*) Rationing of shops.

(*b*) Increasing the price of liquor.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops.

(*d*) Reducing days and hours of sale.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops.

(*i*) Prescribing age-limit for customers of liquor.

(*j*) Encouraging temperance work by subsidising Temperance Associations or by some other means.

If the strength of liquor is reduced, the consumption of liquor increases and the people resort to excess. The liquor so reduced in strength is more injurious to health in other ways than the liquor of higher strength. I am not in favour of the means suggested under (*g*), (*h*) and (*k*). I would however urge that shops for the sale of all intoxicating drugs should not be located in the heart of the town or village as it will have otherwise a baneful effect on the new generation.

11. It would be a sound policy if the principle of local option is introduced and this could be exercised by the public, if the principal men of the town representing different sects and classes are formed into an Advisory Committee.

12. The municipalities and district or taluka local boards may be empowered to determine the number and location of liquor shops.

13. The existing Advisory Committees would be useful if they represent all classes of public and also if their desires are attended to fully.

14. So far as this country is concerned, the evil of drink does not contribute so much to increase in crime or towards output of work so as to be dwelt upon.

15. Need not be answered by me.

16. I have no special remarks to offer in the matter of prohibiting and restricting the use of opium and hemp, except that the shops should not be located in the thickly populated quarters of towns and villages.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is not prevalent in the Larkana District, except in very rare circumstances and also when it is medicinally recommended.

## No. 118.

### Replies of Mr. MURLIDHAR JERAMDAS PANJABI, President, Shikarpur Municipality.

1. I have been on the Municipality for 23 years, as a practising pleader for 26 years, as President of the Municipality for some years and also a member of the Advisory Committee. I had also occasion, during my stay in England, to look into the question.

2. I admit that Government has tried various means to lessen and check drink but they have all failed in their purpose.

I am strongly of opinion that considering past failure and the present conditions, nothing short of total prohibition will eradicate this evil. No half-measures will do. There will be many difficulties to surmount, and there will no doubt be discontent in some quarters, specially among those who are addicted to drink. But these are no grounds for not resorting to prohibition. The penal laws create any amount of discontent among criminal tribes. The abolition of *sati* and slave trade also created discontent at the time and created many difficulties, which had to be faced. Even those addicted to drink actually get on without it, when they are detained in jail for any offence. Government makes no provision for them nor is their discontent taken into any consideration.

3. I advocate a complete change of policy as indicated above. I gave the same opinion before the Advisory Committee and after full discussion they agreed with me that total prohibition was the only policy for Government to adopt, if the people are to be freed from this evil.

4. As said above I am in favour of total prohibition. My reasons are that drink is a pernicious evil and all half-measures hitherto taken by Government have proved a failure. Considering that drink (*a*) affects the death-rate to a great extent, (*b*) is the cause of a large number of suicides, (*c*) is the cause of insanity in a large number of cases, (*d*) is the active co-operator of the deadly germ of tuberculosis, (*e*) is the cause of weakness, dwarfings and other defects among young children, (*f*) is the cause of a large number of crimes and other evils, (*g*) affects the brain and temper and results in great many assaults, (*h*) weakens the capacity for work or labour (it has been established that it is a wrong notion that it is a stimulant), and (*i*) is the destructor of the happy home, it is imperatively necessary both for the people as well as Government to make every sacrifice to uproot the system. Among the uneducated or the half-educated masses, the so-called moderation results in absolute drunkenness.

I consider the measure to be quite practicable. Even America at first thought it impracticable, but it is thought differently now. I admit that liquor could be had in America even now. I saw a film in London 'America Dry'. Every barber, photographer, hawker of goods was represented as carrying a bottle of liquor concealed in his goods, for illicit sale. It must be perfectly true that there must be illicit drinking but it is nothing compared to what it used to be. It is pretty certain that as police methods improve and public opinion grows stronger and stronger and Temperance Societies are encouraged, it will become more and more difficult to purchase illicit liquor. Undoubtedly Pussyfoot Johnson deserves very great credit for his achievements in this direction. As soon as prohibition is brought in force in India I expect that many Johnsons will come out here to take up the temperance work in hand. No doubt the task here will in some respects be more difficult, but it will certainly not be impossible. Every Provincial Government is now being manned by Ministers who in the past have declared themselves in favour of total abstinence and Excise, being a Transferred subject, is in their charge. These are favourable circumstances and it is the task of Government to plunge with boldness straight for prohibition. I am sure that the moral elevation, which will thereby come to the country, will be a far greater asset to the whole state than the revenue that is now being derived from the sale of drink. I shall write about finance down below.

Nothing short of a prohibition law will do.

5. (*a*) This will have to be stopped by legislation and punitive methods as usual. It is a huge task but not impossible. By and by the task will become easier by the creation of public opinion.

(*b*) It is hoped that as soon as prohibition is made the rule in British India, the Indian States will not take long to follow suit. There will of course be illicit liquor imported into British India but the quantity will be so small that it will not produce the evils enumerated above. With the closing of distilleries in British India and Indian States and the non-importation of foreign liquor, it will become extremely difficult and very costly to get illicit liquor specially when there will be always the fear of punitive laws.

(*c*) The discontent will have to be faced, whether now or ten years hence. The wishes or so-called comforts of a few will have to be set aside when the health, morals and dignity of a nation are to be saved. This discontent will be only for a short time in the beginning.

(*d*) This must be faced and the expense incurred for saving the nation from the evils of drink. The enthusiasm among the people and a strong public opinion will greatly help.

(*e*) This is probable in a small degree but may well be neglected.

6. As submitted before, drink has a decidedly pernicious effect upon children. I have actually seen this in many families. There is evidence of this to be found in the reports of various publications issued by Health and Children's Protection Associations and Societies.

Thus—'Defective children increased with alcoholisation of fathers.'

'Deaths, defects and dwarfings to the young are to a great extent due to alcoholized parents.'

'For children's misery parents' drink is to blame in at least three cases out of four.'

We actually find in our schools that children of wine drinkers are irrgeular in attendance, weak in health as they fall ill more frequently and their illness lasts longer, and are of excitable temper.

7. Legislation and side by side temperance and propaganda work are in my opinion the best methods for attaining total prohibition.

8. Yes, I should apply prohibition to all kinds of liquors.

9 and 10. These are all half-measures which have been tried in one form or another and have failed to succeed. Nor will they succeed even if tried in groups or if pushed with vigour. Rationing of shops or reducing shops or the hours of sale or prescribing age limit or prohibiting removal from shop, will all have the effect of filling the pockets of the dealers or middlemen. The demand will be much in excess of the supply but the means of getting drink will be there and the moral and legal prohibition will be wanting.

11. Failing total and general prohibition, I should go in for local option. The option should be exercised through local bodies.

12. Yes, failing both, prohibition and local option, I should invest local bodies with all the arrangements. They are already invested with powers and duties connected with the health and comforts of the people and this should be their department. The odium which Government has to face now will thereby be transferred to these local bodies. They should certainly not be called upon to make good any part of the revenue, but if Government cannot do without it and must insist upon it, then I suggest decrease of the present share of the educational grant to these bodies.

13. The advisory bodies are of no importance and exist only in name. The members forming these committees are mostly anxious to do useful work in this direction but they do not take much interest simply because they are not assigned any regular duties nor have they been given any powers, so that they do not feel any responsibilities. If total prohibition or even option is adopted, these committees will serve as very useful machinery for various purposes.

14. From my 26 years' experience at the bar and on account of my coming in contact with all sorts of people, I can safely assert that drink contributes to an increase in crime in a great measure. Gambling and drinking are followed by thefts, burglaries, forgeries and murderous assaults. Drink is also used for silencing the warnings of conscience.

That drink comes in the way of output of work, makes workers unsteady and irregular, cannot be gainsaid. Generally speaking, every master or employer of skilled labour will give preference to a teetotaler. Much less reliance and trust are shown to a servant who is given to drink.

15. To meet the deficit I should first suggest great reduction in expenditure in the higher services. Take for example the Educational services in Sind. Formerly we used to have one Educational Inspector for Sind. How many have we got now and has there been improvement and advancement in education to that extent? We have the Inspector of Drawing, the Inspector of Science, the Inspector of Training Schools, an Inspector of Health, an Inspectress of Female Schools, etc., etc. What is the total cost of their salaries, offices, travelling and so on? Similarly in the P. W. D. we have the two Superintendent Engineers, a Chief Engineer and a lot of other Upper Subordinates who could be dispensed with. Similarly in the Revenue Department, a number of Deputy Collectors are unnecessary. For example in the Sukkur Division which has always been a charge for one Deputy Collector, we have now one Assistant Collector in full charge, one Assistant Collector under training, one Deputy Collector in charge of Sukkur Taluka and one Deputy Collector in charge of Garhi Yasin Taluka though he really works as a Personal Assistant to the Collector. Thus a Division consisting of three Talukas only has four Deputy Collectors and all draw travelling allowances I believe.

Even in other parts of Sind many Deputy Collectors have each only two Talukas in charge. Again in the office of the Commissioner in Sind so many Deputy Collectors have recently been employed to do that work which formerly used to be done by only one Deputy Collector.

I am strongly of opinion that the Deputy Collectors are absolutely unnecessary. They only delay disposal of work. Were these offices of Deputy Collectors done away with

altogether, the Mukhtyarkars can directly deal with the Collectors. The money thus saved can more than meet the deficit created by the abolition of excise.

Similarly in other departments large savings can be well effected. The Inspectors in the Police Department are quite unnecessary.

If the suggested reduction does not suffice to make up for the lost revenue, I should as a last measure propose the reduction of educational and medical grants to local bodies, or the introduction of a 'prohibition tax'. This will no doubt create discontent but Government must first show their *bona fides* by serjously taking measures of real reduction and economy in all its departments, commencing from the top.

16 and 17. I have no special remarks to make about opium and hemp. But they must come within the prohibition. So far as I know, seldom is opium given to children in this part of the country except in the case of Pathan families.

No. 119.

REPLIES OF MR. G. M. MIRZA, DISTRICT DEPUTY COLLECTOR, SEHWAN, LARKHANA DISTRICT, SIND.

1. I am a District Deputy Collector in charge of a Sub-Division. As a Chairman, as a Vice-President and as a President of several municipalities and local boards in Sind ; as a Mukhtiarkar, as a Daftardar to the Collector of Karachi where the Excise work is as heavy as varied, and as a District Deputy Collector for years, I can claim some knowledge of the subject I am called upon to opine.

2. (*a*) The Excise policy of Government has done excellent work in the past but needs a change in the present with the changed conditions of life.

(*b*) Moderate use of alcohol and provision for the needs of such persons as wish to drink with comparative laxity of moral, social and religious laws has led to unwholesome excesses of it encouraging intemperance.

3. To me the following suggestions occur for changing the present policy.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition but not all at once. Distinctions between strong and weak spirits, limits recommended, excesses deprecated, in my opinion, serve no useful purpose. Because is there any wine without its effect of stupifying the human brain ? If not, the mind, inebriated though slightly, disables the man from exercising proper self-control. One is not the same as he was before he quaffed his first drink of wine, and the little always leads to much, as the weaker stuff is soon changed for a strong one till its use is regarded almost as a necessity of life, and the misery, disease, and pauperism which it brings in its train become inevitable.

A sudden and absolute prohibition is however neither possible nor practical at present and for some time to come. Therefore, an attempt has to be made to discourage its use by partial prohibition working slowly to a total one subject to certain conditions of progressive realisation of the principle of local option.

To achieve this no extra preventive staff is necessary. The existing preventive staff does no work and it is well-known, at least so far as Sind is concerned, that many of those outside the large towns do no work and the work shown by them in their diaries exists on paper only.

The existing Police force, well versed in the art of detection and which outside the large towns is on the whole having an easy time comparatively, can well enforce the rules and the laws passed to stop the illicit means of obtaining liquor from unauthorized sources and places, in conjunction with the growing bodies of willing workers on Temperance Associations.

The dissatisfaction, if any, from among the drunkards would be a short lived one. The bad customs and bad habits of certain classes must be disregarded specially when the object is to save unconscious humanity from misery and disease.

6. I fully agree with the argument that prohibition, although it might not be effective in the present generation, is bound to have its influence in the long run.

7. The goal can be reached by prohibitive legislation coupled with the energetic aid of the associations and boards secured by more generous recognition of their work ; as well as by the introduction of a system of surcharge or graduated fees, and by replacing the present auction sales. Licensing Boards in larger, and Advisory Committees in smaller municipalities and in rural areas might be appointed.

8. To begin with I would apply the principle of prohibition to all distilled liquors.

9 and 10. The proposals laid down in paragraph 10 might all be given a trial.

Further, use of liquor for students under 18 and for labourers during working hours should be prohibited. Breaches of these as of other rules should be heavily punished.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. Any objection raised or prejudice expressed by more than half of the population of a locality should be respected.

12. Local bodies such as municipalities, local boards, notified area committees and village panchayats should have the powers of determining the number and location of shops in their respective charges on the condition of raising any part of the revenues that would be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers in their area. The charge will be a legitimate one as the steps taken will ensure bodily and mental efficiency of the population in their charge.

13. The Advisory Committees at present exist in large towns only where they are doing quite good work. Given more importance and encouragement they might prove more useful.

14. The evil of drink is responsible for the mental overthrow of a large section of the people many of whom are sent to asylums for the insane, some to prisons as convicts, not to mention the misfortunes of abandoned children by several who by alcohol add to the death-roll dying prematurely through alliance with all manner of physical maladies.

Work entrusted to those who are addicted to drink is always unsatisfactory.

15. Any loss accruing from reduction of excise revenue might be recouped by increasing the tax on stamps, irrigation and amusements proportionately.

16. Taking the general habits, diseases, climate, temperaments and idiosyncrasies, I would propose to extend the same precautions against the use of opium and hemp drugs. The use of these increases the determination of the blood to the head in the same way as alcoholic stimulants do and there is no reason why they should not be prohibited as restricted.

17. Unfortunately opium is given by hired maid servants, ayahs and nurses to children of gentlemen to sooth them to sleep, to enable them to go to sleep themselves. Low class Indians also use it as a powerful agent in various cordials for their children. Infants being peculiarly susceptible to the influence of opium, very minute quantities prove fatal for them, swelling their death-rate everywhere.

No. 120.

REPLIES OF KHAN SAHEB DILMURADKHAN BAHADURKHAN, PRESIDENT, JACOBABAD MUNICIPALITY.

1. I am a Zamindar owning over 14,000 acres of land and own villages. I have been in constant touch with people of different opinions and have at various times discussed this subject with them.

2. I approve of the policy laid down by the Government of India and I do consider that it has put an effective check on intemperance; however, I would make further suggestions also.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition for it is not a practical measure.

6. As regards the next generation, I believe that the present policy of Government and spread of education are bound to be effective and will automatically minimise consumption of intoxicants.

7. I for one believe that if social workers go on preaching the advantages of prohibition, they will reach the goal of success in the near future. Legislation may give rise to disaffection towards Government.

8. I would personally wish the use of toddy or shindy also to decrease by and by.

9. In my opinion absolute prohibition is not feasible and desirable in the present circumstances; methods should, however, be adopted to reduce the consumption of liquor.

10. I endorse the methods suggested in paragraph 10 but I hold that the price should not be increased more than what it is at present.

11. Time has not yet come for the introduction of the principle of local option.

12. I cannot make up my mind to be in favour of the suggestion of investing all local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, looking to the present condition of the people.

13. As regards opium and hemp, I would suggest that restrictions should be put on the quantity of their sale to individuals and that it may be reduced if possible.

17. The custom of giving opium to children is not prevalent in this part of the country.

No. 121.

No. Rev.

Mirpurkhas, 31st March 1922.

From

J. MONTEATH, Esq., I.C.S.,
Collector of Thar Parkar;

To,

THE SECRETARY, EXCISE COMMITTEE.

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated the 4th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a statement showing the figures of consumption of various intoxicating articles for the last five years.

2. In my opinion total prohibition of liquors and other intoxicating drugs is not a possible, nor, I think, is it a desirable step. Efforts to abolish a natural desire, which has existed since recorded times, would only result in its illegal satisfaction. Excess in this, as in everything including efforts to reform the world, are to be deprecated. The best practical means of discouraging excess in alcohol consumption seem to me to be those practised by this and all civilised Governments.

3. I regret no further answers are possible in view of short notice given.

*The figures of consumption of various articles for the last five years ending 1920-21.*

| Name of Article. | 1916-17. | 1917-18. | 1918-19. | 1919-20. | 1920-21. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Country liquor in gallons .. .. | 9,134 | 8,810 | 9,813 | 9,310 | 10,265 |
| 2. Opium in seers .. .. | 1,400 | 1,572 | 944 | 1,015 | 959 |
| 3. Bhang „ .. .. | 3,258 | 3,272 | 3,659 | 4,900 | 4,253 |
| 4. Ganja „ .. .. | 262 | 165 | 212 | 244 | 266 |
| 5. Charash „ .. .. | .... | 1,030 | 565 | 539 | 332 |
| 6. Foreign liquor in gallons .. .. | Not available. | 1,049 | 1,341 | 1,608 | 1,085 |

No. 122.

REPLIES OF Mr. J. W. ROWLAND, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, SUKKUR.

1. Have served 12 years in the Imperial Indian Police and in that capacity have had many opportunities of coming into contact with all classes.

2. (*a*) The policy laid down cannot in my opinion be improved upon.

(*b*) Satisfactory. Intemperance, as far as my experience goes, does not to all intents and purposes exist in this district any way.

3. I advocate no change.

4. I do not consider prohibition the lesser of the two evils and I should in any case certainly consider it impracticable.

5. *Vide* please paragraph 4.

6. Any effect might be in an undesirable direction.

7. I don't.

8. Have not sufficient experience in the matter to formulate an opinion.

9. Education and encouraging temperance work.

10. Something might be done under each of these heads.

11. No. It is too likely to result in a majority being ruled over by a fanatical minority.

12. No, but if they were given permission to interfere I certainly think they should guarantee any resulting loss to the revenue.

13. I do not know.

14. I should doubt it.

16. I do not class opium and hemp with alcoholic drinks and I consider any steps taken to stamp out their use would be to the good.

17. I cannot say.

x 1366—114

No. 123.

REPLIES OF SETH REWACHAND RAMCHAND MANJANI, PRESIDENT, MIRPURKHAS MUNICIPALITY.

1. Municipality.

2 and 3. A change in the policy is desirable inasmuch as to admit the use of liquor only as medicine, and in furtherance of this policy all considerations of revenue must be absolutely subordinated. The raising of tax is not quite a right step towards the improvement arrived at, but the reduction of the number of such shops is.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition, except, as suggested in the foregoing paragraph when used as medicine. My reasons for this are (*1*) that from the point of view of health, it does more harm than good, if good it does at all, (*2*) it tells heavily upon one's purse and therefore from the economic point of view it does great harm and (*3*) taking it in moderation does not stop at any degree. It generally develops in excess, and its total prohibition is therefore essential.

I consider this practical, and would accordingly suggest that in the first year all the shops should be closed except those at municipal towns. Thus not being easy of reach, people will train themselves to do without it and if any one keeps in stock, he should not be allowed to keep more than half a gallon, the Act being amended accordingly. Next year the shops at municipal towns should be reduced to only one in each town. In the third year all the remaining shops should be closed and only the druggists be licensed to sell it on a certificate from a Medical Practitioner as in the case of cocaine.

5. Police department should be required to watch over (*a*) obtaining liquor by illicit means and (*b*) import from Indian States and Portuguese territory, etc. (*c*) In Sind no class or community has any custom requiring the use of liquor. Panchats are already passing resolutions about the total prohibition on festivals. There is therefore no apprehension of any discontent among the rayats. Even if it does exist, it should be risked for the sake of saving the country from the clutches of this terrible drug. (*d*) If the work is entrusted to the police department as suggested in the beginning of this paragraph there will be no need to maintain any more preventive establishment. Police department can well afford to take this task upon themselves. (*e*) Liquor unlike other drugs is a thing which cannot be substituted by anything else. There should therefore be no apprehension in this respect.

6. I agree with this view.

7. I think legislative prohibition coupled with prohibition of sale would be sufficiently effective.

8. I would for the present apply prohibition to distilled liquors only.

9.

10. As I am in favour of total prohibition, I have nothing to say on this point.

11. Do. do.

12. Do. do.

13. There being no advisory committee here, I have no experience of their work.

14. Yes, on both the points.

15. I fail to find any source of revenue to make up the loss. But I would suggest decrease in expenditure by abolishing the Excise Department altogether and transferring the work to the Revenue and Police Departments.

16. I would suggest reducing the number of shops for these drugs also.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is not prevalent in this part of the country except perhaps in the Desert. I am not in a position to say anything as to the latter part of this question.

No. 124.

REPLIES OF MR. TIKAMDAS WADHUMAL, BAR.-AT-LAW, KARACHI.

1. I am lawyer by profession. I am interested in the drink problem generally. I have recently been appointed as a Municipal representative on the local Excise Advisory Committee.

2. (*a*) I am of opinion that the present policy of Government does not go to the root of the problem; that it stops short at a point where a greater and more intensive effort is required to be put forth. The policy does not propose to interfere with the use of alcoholic drinks if used in moderation. This is absolutely vague.

The attainment of a specific goal is not aimed at, nay, it is not even contemplated.

What is moderation ? The word is of a comparative degree. It is a relative term and the sense conveyed by it is very elastic. Moreover, who is to judge of this in individual cases ? The suggestion, I submit, is not feasible of practical results. Besides, I do not consider it as a duty of the State to pander to the baser desires of some of its members. Drink and drugs are not necessary to life. And this parental solicitude on the part of Government for the moderate drinker is inexplicable. The moderate drinker to-day is generally the confirmed drinker to-morrow.

If the State is to give effect to the pronounced convictions of her people on this question, if Government is to mould itself to suit the wishes of the preponderating majority of the country, as recently witnessed by the opinions expressed by members both officials and non-officials in the Legislative Council of the different provinces and as evidenced by discussions in the various local bodies and municipalities, and also as manifested in the provision made *re* prohibition of drink in the rules of the panchayats and other recognised bodies of the various castes and communities, it must not regard the interference with the habits of a few of the individuals as outside its duty. Although on paper the settled policy of Government is to minimize temptation and discourage excess, regardless of financial consideration, my conviction is that in practice it is not always followed and that revenue considerations do successfully conflict with the moral objections of the State.

(*b*) The end not being definite, the measures and half-hearted efforts put forth to achieve even the object Government have in view must necessarily be inadequate and perfunctory.

One of the objects aimed at is to minimize temptation to those who do not drink, but I fail to see one expedient or measure put forth which may be said to strive after this.

The other object is to discourage excess amongst those who drink. This is sought to be achieved by—

(i) taxing liquor as high as possible,

(ii) restricting the number of liquor shops,

(iii) an examination of the location of liquor shops,

(iv) conforming to public opinion as far as possible.

The means suggested above are not bad, but the application thereof is defective. The remedy to be applied is inadequate. Instead of reducing the quantity of supply at the source, it is left to a fortuitous conjunction of measures to work a change in the mentality of the people.

Of the measures specified above, those shown under (*i*) and (*ii*) are in the right direction. Regarding (*iv*) there does not appear to have been any great response to public opinion, which is demanding drastic measures. As far as (*iii*) location of shops is concerned, these appear to be in the very places where they ought not to be. And what is remarkable is that inspite of all Government measures taken to decrease consumption, the fact remains, it is on the increase.

3. I, therefore, consider a change of policy to be very urgent and essential and would suggest a progressive restriction on the supply and sale of alcoholic drinks with a view to the realization of total prohibition in, say, 10 years. And for the carrying out of this forward policy I would suggest that—

(*a*) All municipal, district and taluka local boards should be allowed local option as regards the location and number of liquor shops within their area.

(*b*) All shops must be rationed in consultation with the above boards, and quantities supplied at the commencement should be decreased progressively with the view to attain extinction of the traffic at the expiry of 10 years.

(*c*) The hours during which liquor shops remain open must be progressively curtailed with a view to their being absolutely closed up and such shops should never be allowed to remain open after 6 o'clock in the evening.

(*d*) The proof strength must be gradually decreased, until from sheer dislike the drink is refused.

(*e*) The quantity produced by Government or contractors' distilleries be regulated in a diminishing measure to suit the suggestion made above.

4. Yes. The prohibition is the only just and sound policy for India.

(*a*) The Excise policy has nothing to recommend itself except the question of revenue to the provincial Government. But even the advantage of revenue is more apparent than real. It has been conceded that little that is good and everything that is base is the outcome from the effects of drink.

(*b*) Its use is forbidden by almost all religions.

(*c*) It is the source of disease and a fruitful cause of crime.

(*d*) The working classes specially get enervated, resulting in an increasing inefficiency industrially.

(*e*) Drink often breaks the harmony of homes and brings untold miseries there. This is specially so in the case of poorer people.

(*f*) The mortality rate amongst those that drink is higher and hence the rebate allowed only to total abstainers by Insurance Companies.

I do emphatically consider it to be a practical measure. The prohibition problem created no difficulty in Canada, Russia and other places. America dry has greatly benefited and is better off than before. And there is no reason why India cannot take a leaf from that and learn.

The way in which the prohibition policy can succeed in India is, according to my understanding, explained by me in paragraph 3 above. In addition, all the temperance societies should be helped and patronized in carrying out the propaganda and Government also should carry on an active propaganda, specially through schools (both primary and secondary), showing the use and misuse of alcohol. Archbishop Whatleys' remarks "Take care of the boys and the men will take care of themselves" is particularly applicable above.

5. (*a*) I understand that departmental measures are already in force and would suggest their being continued in an intensified form. Government also would be well advised in sending circulars to the magistracy to be strict with respect to offences under this head.

Some of the articles mentioned in question 5 (*a*) are required for manufacturing sugar, an industry which requires to be investigated and developed. I would suggest Government starting a model industry which will not only be a step in the right direction but would be helping the cause of temperance as well.

(*b*) Regarding Indian States, public opinion there, I believe, is as strong against drink as it is in British India. The Government of H. H. the Maharaja of Scindia, for instance, have taken measure to cope with the drink problem. The Indian States, moreover, may be invited to co-operate in this movement, and I have not the slightest doubt that they will with pleasure respond to the invitation. But even if they do not, Government can adopt measures for the prevention of smuggling. The country liquor manufactured in the territory of H. H. The Mir of Khairpur cannot be imported into British territory without a license and the measures taken for checking smuggling are presumed to be working satisfactorily.

The question of Portuguese territory however is a little different, and there will be greater temptation to import from this source; but it is to be remembered that the extent of such territory is but small and that there is already an efficient Customs barrier.

(*c*) In the interests of humanity and India as a whole, the policy of total prohibition should be carried out. The customs and habits, if any, prevailing amongst certain classes will automatically adjust themselves and there is hardly any apprehension of discontent, if the policy of progressive prohibition is adhered to.

(*d*) This is bound to exist, but the effects can be minimised by enlisting the co-operation of public bodies and by having an efficient staff of subordinates, not very low paid.

(*e*) Most of the other drugs are always regulated and I would suggest simultaneous decrease in their cultivation. We have, after all, to count upon public opinion for effecting a radical change, as in the absence of that all measures that may be undertaken are bound to be abortive.

6. My aim is not prohibition all at once but within a period of, say, ten years; and the beneficial effects will be apparent with the progress of the prohibition movement.

7. Social evils existing on a large scale can be remedied only through legislation, based upon the preponderating voice and goodwill of the people affected. I therefore consider legislation necessary for this purpose, but it must be coupled with an intensive educative propaganda and an invitation to the public to co-operate.

8. Yes.

9. Absolute prohibition is both feasible and desirable.

10. It has been pointed out by me above in paragraph 3 that most of these methods could be put in motion at once and simultaneously. I would further suggest that special

licenses should not be issued on the occasions of festival and fairs. I would also put the age limit to 18, below which liquor should not be sold to customers, and the liquor in any way should not be permitted to be removed from shops for consumption.

In the case of foreign liquors, the import should be under a system of rationing, which would limit the quantity imported in such a way that the traffic should end in ten years.

11. Local auction should be exercised through their representatives on municipal and local boards and in other places by village panchayats recognised for the purpose.

12. Yes. As the municipalities and local bodies will gain nothing financially I would not hold them responsible for any direct loss of revenue. Loss of revenue, if at all, according to me, will be temporary.

13. I have a little experience of the existing local Advisory Committee, having been appointed not long ago, since when not a single meeting has been convened. Under the circumstances I am not in a position to suggest any changes.

14. Yes. The Lord Chief Justice has said that 90 per cent. of crimes can be proved to be traceable to alcoholism either in the criminal or in his ancestors, and that in all probability the other 10 per cent. should be attributed to the same source. And it is likely that what is true of England is true of India also.

15. I am of opinion that restriction or suppression of the drink traffic will not diminish the taxable capacity of the people, or take any wealth out of the country. In this connection I would like to quote the remarks of Mr. Gladstone to brewers ; " Gentlemen, you need not give yourselves any trouble about the revenue. The question of revenue must never stand in the way of reforms. Besides with a sober population, not wasting their earning, I shall know where to obtain the revenue." If all the money invested in the drink industry is diverted to other profitable uses, I have no doubt that it will yield a greater return than the drink industry. The earning capacity of the people will increase which will result in swelling the revenue under the income tax head. And when that happens provincial Governments could call upon the Imperial Government to contribute to their expenditure from the Income Tax head. In the meantime, I would suggest economies in the higher paid salaries by curtailing such appointments, and the abolition of the C. I. D. The balance of the deficit to be met from additional taxation on luxuries. I doubt, however, if this latter will be necessary, as the deficit on account of stoppage of the liquor traffic is expected to be in full force at the end of ten years, and the amount of the deficit every year will not be appreciable.

16. No.

17. So far as I know ayahs are in the habit of administering opium to the children in their custody to quiet them so that they may have an easy time.

## MISCELLANEOUS WITNESSES.

### No. 125

### Replies of the Bombay Millowners' Association.

The Committee of the Bombay Millowners' Association, having carefully considered the main aspects of the enquiry to be undertaken by the Excise Committee as indicated in the questionnaire issued by that body, desire in the first instance to make a few general observations with regard to the evil of drink and various methods of combating it with a view to render the views expressed in their answers to the various points raised in the questionnaire more intelligible.

The policy of the Government of India in the above regard, as outlined in the extract from their Finance Department Resolution No. 5001-Exc., dated the 7th September 1905, quoted in the second question in the questionnaire, appears to the Committee of the Association to be the right one if it is properly carried out. On the other hand if the present movement to curtail or prohibit the liquor traffic represents a general demand from the majority of the people, the Association considers that it is undeniably the duty of Government to help such a movement, even if such a course is likely to lead to a diminution of Government's revenue. The solution, however, in the opinion of the Association, is not to be found in any policy involving the introduction, immediately, of total prohibition.

The Committee are aware that much has been said with regard to the total prohibition obtaining at present in America but, in the first place, it is usually forgotten that such prohibition was already in force in several States of the Union—in Maine since 1851—and that the majority of these States had abandoned it, as in their experience prohibition had led to illicit distillation, police corruption and other grave abuses. And secondly, the Committee consider that the experiment now under trial in that country also requires careful watching as, in their opinion, there is considerable doubt as to whether prohibition has been so far an unqualified success.

In any case the Committee consider that before total prohibition in a vast country like India, inhabited by so many different peoples, can be successfully enforced, public opinion needs to be educated in that direction. This must obviously take time. The Committee are, therefore, of opinion that the best policy for the present at any rate is to restrict the liquor traffic as much as possible, or, in other words, to have recourse to *partial* prohibition. The Committee are aware that a certain class of people will object to prohibition of any kind, on principle. All sumptuary laws are odious but in order to prevent moral depravity or to abate a public and growing evil, a few wise regulations may be found to be necessary. The Committee also reject the conclusion that because legislative enactments cannot make a people sober therefore the sale of alcohol need not be restricted. On that plea every fraud and every breach of a contract might be allowed and no protective legislation need be introduced since laws can neither make men moral nor honest.

From the point of view of the Association, comprising as it does a large number of employers of labour, the drink evil amongst the labouring population is undoubtedly a widespread one and the Committee hold the view that any restrictions made for the general community will be of special benefit to the latter class. It is within the knowledge of the Committee that owing to the general increase in their pay the millhands have started to consume foreign spirits whereas formerly they were satisfied with a moderate quantity of country liquor, or even toddy.

With regard to the question of the ways and means by which partial prohibition of the nature recommended can be rendered effective, the Committee venture to suggest the early adoption of the following measures :—

(*a*) An increase in the price of liquor, spirituous liquors more particularly.

(*b*) The reduction of the number of shops, particularly in the industrial areas.

(*c*) The reductoin of the days and hours of sale, all shops being kept closed on festival days, such as Holi, Devali and Mohurram.

(*d*) The reduction of the strength of the liquors.

(*e*) The regulation of the location of shops.

(*f*) The restriction of the import and sale of foreign liquors.

(*g*) The regulation and, where necessary, the prohibition of certain kinds of licenses.

(*h*) The fixing of age limits for customers so that no boy under 18 years can be served with liquor.

(*i*) The imposition of restrictions upon the removal of liquor from shops.

(*j*) Lastly, the encouragement of temperance work (without granting subsidies to particular societies).

The Committee now proceed to answer the questionnaire issued by the Excise Committee, with particular regard to the foregoing general observations.

1. The views indicated in this memorandum are those of the Committee of the Bombay Millowners' Association, whose members have every opportunity of coming in contact with their

working people and are consequently well acquainted with the habits and customs of millhands amongst whom drink is so serious an evil.

2. The Excise policy of Government as outlined in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of the 7th September 1905 is, in the Committee's opinion, a sound one. Much, however, depends on the way in which it is carried out in practice, and the Committee fear that the methods hitherto adopted in that connection have not proved effective in practice; certainly the results that might fairly be expected have not been realised in the case of the mill operatives in Bombay. Intemperance has increased and imported spirits are consumed in greater quantities.

3. As already stated, the Committee consider the existing policy sound and recommend its continuance, provided additional restrictions in the direction of partial prohibition are added.

4. The Committee do not advocate the immediate adoption of a policy of total prohibition as it cannot be said to be a practical proposition at present, but Government should regard total prohibition as the goal towards which their policy should ultimately be directed. For the reason just given the Committee advocate partial prohibition in the meantime.

5. The Committee of the Association do not consider that there can be any serious objections urged against a policy of partial prohibition. With regard to the specific ones, detailed in the questionnaire under reply, the Committee would answer them as follows:—

(*a*) With regard to the first objection, namely, the facility with which liquor can be obtained by illict means from palm trees, etc., the Committee opine that illicit manufacture of liquor being penal, it cannot be resorted to on any extensive scale without speedy detection and they think the ordinary resources of the law ought to be sufficient to prevent its evasion upon any large scale.

(*b*) The Committee consider that the difficulty arising from the proximity of Indian States to British territory can in part be overcome by co-operation with the States in question which are sufficiently enlightened, for the most part, to adopt a similar policy, if partial prohibition is decided upon. On the other hand, the section of the population likely to be affected by its proximity to Portuguese territory is so small as not to require separate consideration under such a system.

(*c*) The Committee do not anticipate that any serious discontent would be caused among millhands by the adoption of partial prohibition, *e. g.*, the closing of liquor shops on the Mohurram and Holi holidays, when the ignorant classes are under the impression that they have religious sanction to drink has not led to any serious discontent.

(*d*) The Committee, moreover, do not think that the adoption of partial prohibition would necessitate an increased preventive establishment. The existing staff appears to be sufficient to cope with the work.

(*e*) With regard to the probability of people being driven to the consumption of other intoxicants and deleterious drugs by the difficulty of obtaining liquor, the Committee suggest that the use of such drugs should also be prohibited. Only confirmed drunkards of the worst type would stoop to their use and they would decrease in number by the passage of time until they became negligible. Further it is probable that a few might, in the absence of liquor, take to less deleterious stimulants, such as tea, or less harmful drugs, such as tobacco.

6. With regard to the question of the influence of prohibition on the next generation, the Committee consider that total prohibition can only be rendered effective by a well-educated public opinion, and consequently that the benefits of partial prohibition would be increasingly realised by succeeding generations.

7. The only alternative method to legislation the Committee can suggest is the extension of compulsory education upon more general lines.

8. The Committee recommend the application of the principle of prohibition in proportion to the evil effects of liquor, for instance, the duty and restriction in respect of spirituous liquors, imported and country-made, should be heavier than in the case of toddy.

9. The Committee consider that partial prohibition is feasible and regard the means to that end suggested in question 10 as quite suitable.

10. Most of the measures suggested in this question have already been dealt with in the first part of this memorandum; moreover, these points, in the aggregate, comprise a system of partial prohibition.

11. The Committee approve the principle of local option but would deprecate its introduction until say five years after the adoption generally of partial prohibition.

12. The Committee would advise the bestowal on local bodies of the powers in question only after partial prohibition has been in operation for five years. They do not, however, think it would be fair to make any local body responsible for repairing any deficiency of revenue due to the reduction or the prohibition of liquor consumption.

13. The Committee have no experience of the Advisory Committees in question and do not feel competent to offer any criticism in regard to their constitution.

14. It seems to the Committee to be a generally accepted axiom that drink does tend to increase crime; at any rate, it certainly causes a considerable loss of efficiency in the Bombay cotton mills.

15. The Committee consider that this question cannot adequately be discussed until the full extent of the loss of revenue can be ascertained, but they are of opinion that no price is too high to pay for the ultimate benefits accruing from the decreased consumption of alcoholic liquors. With a sober and educated population no difficulty will be found in raising the amount necessary to cover any decrease in revenue due directly to the abolition of liquor duties.

16. My Committee strongly recommend the drastic restriction of the sale of all drugs including opium and hemp.

17. The custom of giving opium to children is fairly prevalent among the working classes of Bombay and undoubtedly has serious effects on the mentality of children and leads ultimately to an increase in the death rate. Improved education and the spread of knowledge is the only solution. As an ameliorative measure the Committee recommend the installation of creches in districts with large female working populations, preferably by locality and not in individual mills (though mills might contribute to the cost of these creches) in order that the children of women workers may be looked after and any inducement to drug them may eventually be removed.

*Oral Evidence.*

Mr. S. D. Saklatwala, on behalf of the Bombay Millowners' Association, replied to the President:—"The consumption of liquor among mill hands is on the increase, mainly on account of the high wages that they have been getting during the past three or four years, and the facilities which they obtain for drinking, the liquor shops being so very close to the mill areas. We have not had any actual cases of drunkenness during working hours or within mill premises, but what we do find is that on holidays they drink heavily, and the next day most of them are unable to attend to work; this affects production. If the number of shops are considerably reduced in mill areas, it may be that some people may not care to go very far.

"We cannot say exactly how much of the absenteeism is due to liquor. Ordinarily it is 12 to 15 per cent. but after holidays it is seldom below 25 per cent. It goes even higher after the Holi holidays. It would be better to close the shops on holidays and on pay day and the day immediately following pay day. The mill hands generally drink in the evening. In the day time those who are absent frequent liquor shops. If shops are closed till 5 p.m., it will, to a certain extent, decrease consumption and will not interfere with the labourer's desire for drink.

"Those who have to work for nine hours a day and that not under very happy conditions perhaps do require some stimulant, but mostly the mill hands frequent liquor shops because they have nothing else to do as soon as they are free, and this stimulant is really not necessary from the health point of view.

"Twenty per cent. of the mill hands are women, 5 per cent. half-timers, and the rest are adult males. As a rule women workers do not drink; they are given easier work, and they can get on without any stimulant. If men are prevented from drinking, it may be that those who are habituated to it might find it difficult, but later on it will certainly be much more beneficial. Altogether, we believe that about Rs. 7 to 8 a month on an average are spent on liquor by a labourer used to drinking.

"About 30 per cent. of the adult male workers are paid by piece work, and if they stopped drinking, production would certainly increase, and they might be able to earn Rs. 2 to 3 more per month.

"One of the main inducements for the stoppage of drink is to show them the saving that they would be able to effect, but if they are to be taxed, they might say that they would prefer to spend the money on drink.

"I am unable to suggest any methods of taxation; but industries should be encouraged, better methods should be employed in agriculture and forest exploitation, which would bring in more revenue. I do not think it is right for any witness to suggest sources of revenue. That is absolutely the business of Government.

"I am against the rationing of liquor to individuals. There is every probability that the coupon system will not be carried out fairly.

"We should first watch the effects of the restrictions which we advocate and then, after some time, would consider the question of local option. It may take about five years to arrive at some results, but it is possible that before that period local bodies may be allowed to exercise local option."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"I do not think that mill owners should contribute anything to the revenue solely to bring about prohibition.

"Increase in the price of liquor is only one of the remedies suggested, and if it is made along with the other remedies, it will have the effect of partial prohibition. In some cases, it may cause some hardship to families, but the great majority of them would benefit.

"There is no possibility of illicit distillation in Bombay City itself but, if total prohibition is enforced in the city, it might encourage illicit importation, and distillation in places like Uran."

To Dr. Patil :—"Most of the mill hands do not drink in their native place, *i.e.*, Konkan. In one of our mills we tried to give our men tea, and spent about Rs. 2,500 per month, in order simply that the men may drink tea just before going home and not take to liquor, but after drinking tea they drink liquor all the same, and I do not think our object has been achieved. It may be that that was so because we gave them tea within the mill itself, but what we suggest is that they must have something after they leave the mill premises and, if tea is distributed to them somewhere outside, or, if they have some cheap shows like cinemas, most of them might be prevented from going to liquor shops.

"If prohibition comes on, there will be some discontent in the beginning but I would ignore it. When shops were closed during the strike there was, to our knowledge, no discontent.

"Foreign liquor should be treated in the same way as country liquor.

"I do not think it fair on the part of Government to pick out certain temperance societies and subsidise them.

"Let Government declare that they are for partial prohibition in the beginning, let them declare that if public opinion wants it they will go in for total prohibition ; that will have some beneficial effect.

"Keeping flesh and egg preparations in liquor shops is bad."

To Mr. Knight :—"If prohibition is introduced gradually, the loss in revenue will also be gradual, and every year it could be made-up. I do not think the public would like to be taxed directly simply because there is going to be prohibition. As regards indirect taxation Government may find out some method of taxation. As far as mill industry is concerned, neither the employers nor the employees should be taxed. I cannot speak on behalf of the public of the Presidency."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai :—"There is a desire on the part of the public to change the present policy to a certain extent.

"No exception should be made in the case of foreign liquor or of Europeans, if any policy of partial prohibition is adopted. I do not think it is necessary for one's health to drink.

"We do not know of any instances where drink has been served to half-timers. In one of our mills we employ Mahomedans, and they do drink.

"In order to make up the loss in revenue, if Government find that there is no other way, I would have no objection to such articles as rice being taxed, and I would prefer some form of indirect taxation to the present state of things continuing."

No. 126

REPLIES OF MR. BHAILAL DAJIBHAI AMIN, A.B., M.S.C.I., OF BARODA.

1. I am Managing Agent of the Alembic Chemical Works Company, Limited, which has been supplying for years country liquor to the Baroda State.

2. I think that the excise policy as laid down by the Government of India is commendable in itself but I do not think that the actual results of the policy, as it had been carried out in practice, have been very encouraging. Instead of receiving a check, the drink traffic appears to have increased due to any cause whatsoever.

3. I would certainly advocate radical changes in the policy as laid down by the Government of India in the following directions :—

(*a*) Acceptance on the part of the Government of the principle that the traffic in liquor should be totally stopped within the term of ten years from this year.

(*b*) Local option to be introduced in all towns, and in the rural areas the number of shops should be reduced according to the principle laid down in (*a*) above.

(*c*) In those shops which are retained during this term of ten years a system of rationing on a decreasing scale, calculated at 10 per cent. per year on the last twenty years' average.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. The only reason I can give for it is, that liquor drinking is bad for health and immoral. I do consider that total prohibition is possible. I have stated the steps to be taken in my answer No. 3 above.

5. I consider that the objections usually raised against the policy of prohibition are generally flimsy.

(*a*) It is not so easy as is generally suggested to distil liquor illicitly from palm juice, jaggary, kaju and other materials and, even if it is resorted to, it will be only in extremely few cases and consumption of liquor by such means would be infinitesimal and would never equal even one-hundredth of legalised drinking.

(*b*) The native states, which are all Indian, whether Hindu, Mahomedan or Shikh, would all be prepared at once to adopt the policy of total prohibition, as all the eastern religions, except Christianity, lay down that drinking of liquor is a sin. The boundaries of the Portuguese territory are so well guarded by the Customs and Excise Departments that it is impossible to import alcoholic drinks into British territory.

(*c*) I do not think that certain classes are habitually addicted to drink and, therefore, I do not believe that there would be discontent among any community, if they cannot get liquor.

(*d*) I am not afraid of illicit distillation being conducted on an extensive scale and, therefore, do not think it necessary to have an army of excise officers. Less preventive staff means less illicit distillation and also means less illegal exactions on the part of the establishments.

(*e*) It is pre-supposed when we think of total prohibition of liquor we also mean total prohibition of all other intoxicating and deleterious drugs.

6. I fully believe that total prohibition will have fullest effect on the present generation.

7. In my opinion following steps would be necessary to make total prohibition of alcoholic liquors effective :—

(*a*) Stoppage of distillation of liquor.

(*b*) Closing of all liquor shops.

(*c*) To make distillation and selling of liquor punishable under law.

(*d*) Total prohibition propaganda lectures.

8. I would prohibit distilled liquors and would keep a strict control over consumption of toddy and shindi by a rationing system.

9. .....

10. Out of the means suggested I would advocate—

(*a*) Rationing of shops.

(*b*) .....

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops.

(*d*) Reducing days and hours of sale.

(*e*) Reducing strength of liquor.

(*f*) Regulating the location of shops.

(*g*) .....

(*h*) .....

(*i*) Prescribing age limit for customers of liquor.

(*j*) Encouraging temperance work by subsidising temperance associations.

(*k*) Prohibiting the removal of liquor from shops.

I would add to the list of measures mentioned that of giving local option to people wherever feasible. I do not believe in increasing the price of liquors. In practice, it has never prevented people from drinking. It has made them only poorer. I do not think it is possible for the Provincial Governments to prohibit the importation and sale of foreign liquors without the consent of the Government of India.

Regulation of prohibition of certain kinds of licenses is no remedy against prohibition or reduction in the consumption of liquor.

11. As I have already said I am in favour of local option. The means by which this local option is exercised by the public should be by voting in favour or against sale of liquor in a particular area. Vote may be exercised by all men above the age of eighteen and by all women above the age of fourteen. The voting should be done under the direction of a *panch* selected by the community, all the precautions being exactly the same as those taken at the time of the election for the municipality, Legislative Council, etc.

12. I would not favour investing local bodies with powers of determining the number and location of shops.

13. .....

14. I am of opinion that drink evil does contribute to an increase in crime, and it has an evil effect on the output of work.

15. I would suggest the following sources of income to make up the losses in the excise revenue :—

(*a*) A tax on the profits of the Turf Club.

(*b*) A tax on luxuries, such as jewellery, including stones and pearls.

(*c*) A tax on *sutta* transactions.

In addition to this, I would suggest more economy in the administration.

16. I have no special remarks to offer in the matter of opium and hemp drugs. I advocate total prohibition for this, except for medical purposes.

17. A custom of giving opium to young children is prevalent in poor classes. This certainly undermines the health of children, thus increasing the death rate among them.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. AMIN replied to the President :—" We have been manufacturing spirits at Baroda for the last 12 years. If the quality of liquor is to be improved, it should be allowed to be matured for at least a month, otherwise it is harmful.

" The Alembic Chemical Works are selling country spirit direct to Government at Rs. 1-14-0 per proof gallon. The other spirits such as brandy, whisky, etc. manufactured at the Alembic Works have gone now out of the market on account of cheap German brands, and there are other Government restrictions on them, and it is not possible for them to compete with the German brands which sell at Rs. 3-0-0 a quart. The selling price of these spirits is Rs. 3-8-0, including Tariff duty at the distillery ; transport charges are extra. If the price of country liquor is raised, there is every danger of people taking to foreign liquor, which should sell at least at Rs. 1-8-0 a bottle above the price of country liquor. People take to foreign liquor because t is matured, it has a better flavour, and there is a predeliction in favour of European things.

" If all the distilleries are closed down, and the manufacture of industrial alcohol is encouraged by Government, and Government impose a duty on it, it will recoup the loss of excise revenue to the extent of about 25 per cent.

" I was not aware that *Sutta* transactions were carried on orally, in which case they could not be taxed. Tickets of admission to race enclosures may be taxed to the extent of 50 per cent. I have not thought over the problem of making available to the provincial revenue the proceeds of increased import duties on luxuries. I think people will be willing to pay about 25 per cent. of the loss of revenue by indirect taxation. Employers of labour may also be taxed, as they will benefit by the greater output."

To Mr. Shepherd :—" I refer to Baroda when I say that consumption of liquor has increased in spite of raising the price of liquor.

" My answer to question 5 (*d*) is based on rumour, and there is no other foundation for it."

To Mr. Jadhav :—" Java rum and brandy is 25 degrees U.P.. They can distil liquor cheaper, because of the cheap raw materials available to them in the shape of molasses.

" Industrial alcohol is used in the manufacture of perfumed and denatured spirits, for motive power, furniture polishes and other medical use, manufacture of essences, syrups, aerated waters, ether, chloroform and colours. It is possible to make cheap power alcohol from cheap raw materials. The duty on imported spirits is Rs. 21-14-0 per proof gallon, and the same duty has to be paid on locally manufactured brandies also. It should be subject to the payment of Excise duty which is charged on country spirits. But the Governments of Java, Germany and the United Kingdom give rebate or bounties to encourage their own industries.

If our products are treated as local and subject to excise duty, it would enable us to compete with bounty-fed foreign spirits. I brought this point to the notice of the Fiscal Commission and the Indian Industrial Commission.

" It takes at least a week to distil liquor ; it has to be fermented for at least seven days and the work cannot be done easily. Besides, the liquor produced by illicit distillation is impure and weak, and people will not like it. Liquor can be manufactured from rice, maize, barley, etc.

" The scale of duty being the same, it is not profitable to the consumer to remove liquor from Baroda territory to British territory. "

To Dr. Patil :—" If liquor is diluted in order to reduce the strength, there will be some difference in the taste, but it does no harm. Liquor should not be sold to a person below 25 years of age."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" When a man drinks, he drinks with a purpose, and if you give him dilute liquor, he will take more of it. Liquor should be sold only in sealed bottles, and not loose. I do not wish that drinkers should visit shops and drink there. Only heavy drinkers and poor people visit the shops, and therefore the price should not be increased. "

To Dr. Patil :—" I am not in favour of the coupon system."

To Mr. Madon :—" We use mhowra flowers for the manufacture of industrial alcohol because that 's the only raw material available at a cheap rate. Alcohol manufactured from other materials like rice, maize, etc., would be costlier. We sell it to medical men and varnish merchants, but there are at present no other industries in Bombay requring industrial alcohol. We sell it at Rs. 1-8-0 per gallon. Rs. 1-4-0 is the original price, 2 annas the denaturing cost, and 2 annas profit.

" If all the liquor that is now consumed were to be converted into Industrial alcohol, I think there would be a sufficient market for it. If mohwra is not available, we import molasses from Java, and the price of it is about the same as that of mhowra."

## No. 127.

REPLIES OF MR. W. H. MARSTON, SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, THANA DISTRICT.

1. District Superintendent of Police. In the capacity of a police officer I have served in several districts. I have come in contact with various classes of people addicted to drink and also cases under Abkari law.

2 (*a*) and (*b*). As far as I have been able to gather I think, in spite of the best intention of Government, the excise policy has not had the desired effect of restricting the drink temptation and therefore there has been no appreciable check on intemperance. But this would be better proved by statistics.

3. The answer to this is given in the following paragraphs.

4. No. I do not think total prohibition to be practicable because of the fear of illicit distillation on a large scale.

5. I am in favour of partial prohibition.

(*a*) As regards illicit distillation this district no doubt affords facilities for illicit distillation from palm tree juice and mhowra flowers, but this can be put down with the combined efforts of the Excise, Police and Magistracy.

(*b*) The border shops should be maintained and the present staff should be able to cope with the smuggling.

(*c*) As partial prohibition is advocated I do not anticipate serious discontent among those addicted to drink as they will yet be able to purchase their drop, though in moderation.

(*d*) The present establishment ought to suffice and stricter measures to prevent illegal exactions by the Abkari Department must be enforced and half the fine, if not all, should be given to the detector.

(*e*) Even if people take to other drugs or intoxicants, their number will be negligible.

6. I do not agree that total prohibition in one generation will breed total abstainers in the next.

7. Panchayat system assisted by legislation is the only means in my opinion that would bring about by degrees the desired result of complete cessation of consumption of alcoholic liquor.

8. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) No. I would not prohibit use of toddy or shindi.

9, 10.

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) Yes. Only hours and not days.

(*e*) Yes. With only one quality in stock.

(*f*) Yes. As far away from the slums as possible and none allowed on the main road.

(*g*) No.

(*h*) No.

(*i*) Yes. Boys under 18 not to be served.

(*j*) Yes.

(*k*) No.

11. No.

12. No. These bodies are in their infancy yet. But year by year in the light of experience this power along with responsibility should be extended.

13. I have no experience.

14. Yes.

15. The different sources from which revenue can be derived are so many that it is left to Government to levy taxes equal to the deficiency on heads which can bear further taxation.

16. No.

17. Yes. It is prevalent among the labouring classes and in the Deccan even amongst the higher classes. It has a very bad effect on the health of children and the death rate amongst children administered opium is proportionately great.

### ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. MARSTON replied to the President :—" The climate of Thana District is such that in the monsoon when labourers are working in the paddy fields they need more liquor than in the

fair season. Government will not be able to restrict intemperance so far as Thana District is concerned, because the people will drink and no steps taken by Government on the present lines will apparently succeed. Prohibition will not improve matters. I should suggest that they should be allowed to drink as much as they like, but that the strength of the liquor should be reduced. I do not believe in total prohibition. It is when strong liquor is used that people become intoxicated which leads to ruin : but one can have his quota and yet be sober.

" I know nothing about the present rationing policy ; it is not in my line. I have not heard of any discontent owing to the present policy.

" I am in favour of free use of toddy, and its sale should be encouraged in preference to that of liquor. When fresh, it is practically harmless. I do not know of any cases where shops have been closed for months together and there was illicit distillation ; but this is not in my line.

" When I say total prohibition is not practicable, my remarks are confined to rural areas where materials, *i.e.*, mhowra flowers, for distillation are available ; where they are not available, they will go long distances and buy or smuggle, and it would be difficult to get information about it. If prohibition were introduced, in one sense detection of illicit distillation would be easy, because wherever come across it would be contraband. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" If the village caste panchayats had sufficient authority and the men were kept under control and well advised and properly handled, I think people would not drink liquor.

" As regards the border shops, it is a question which cuts both ways. If the abkari staff were alert enough to see that no illicit liquor came in, then these shops would be of some assistance to the people to supply their needs. But if everybody were to shut his eyes, the shops would be more of a nuisance. I do not suggest for a moment that the present abkari establishment is addicted to illicit exactions from the people, but I refer to the few temptations to which the abkari department would be subject, as human beings.

" During the 18 months I have been in Thana, I believe I had not more than two instances in which I have had to punish my men for drunkenness. But the policemen drink in moderation.

" In the Police Department, the man who drinks in moderation is a success, for practical purposes, *e.g.*, if he wants any information he visits the liquor shop, offers the men a drink, gets into conversation with them and then tactfully gets the required information. That is the clever man who drinks in moderation, but if he goes to excess, he is helpless and hopeless. Apart from the detection of crime, I could not say if the moderate drinker is more efficient in the discharge of his duties than the *teetotaler*. It depends on the man. "

To Dr. Patil :—" If the strength of liquor is reduced, the purchaser would naturally pay less in price, he will thus be able to get a full bottle which be would perhaps enjoy without suffering any ill effects which he otherwise would if he took strong drink at double the price. Forty per cent. of water may be added for dilution. Restricting the quantity will not satisfy him.

" The agriculturists drink most during the monsoon and on special occasions like marriage ceremonies.

" I am not in favour of total prohibition. At the same time moderation is recommended. Constant intoxication with strong liquor ruins a man entirely.

" Take the case of France against the total prohibition in America. I recommend the former for the people of and conditions prevailing in India. "

## No. 128.

### Replies of Mr. S. M. BHARUCHA, Collector of Thana.

1. I have been a Collector for the last seven years, having been Deputy Collector for the preceding 18 years. I have served in various districts of all the four Divisions in the Presidency, including Sind.

2. Generally speaking the Resolution of the Government of India lays down very sound principles on the question of excise policy, but it has become necessary to introduce a change in the excise policy of the country so as to lessen the evil of drink to the lowest magnitude possible of attainment.

3. Briefly put, the policy I advocate would be "*to put down the evil of drink to the lowest limits capable of attainment by legislative enactment accompanied by suitable executive* measures to effectively carry out the purpose of the Legislature". The suggested reforms are described in the answers to the following questions.

4. I am afraid, I must answer this question in the negative. Total "prohibition" as ordinarily understood is not in my opinion a practicable proposition in India or in fact in any country. At the present moment it has actually been tried only in one country in the world, in the United States of America, and though it must be admitted that no impartial and reliable account of its actual working has been available here, what little we do know and hear of its actual results makes us—to put it mildly—very sceptical of the results that may be attained in India.

5. Since I have not expressed a preference for "prohibition" it is not considered necessary to answer this question in detail. I may only note in passing that each of the objections to "prohibition" summarized in this question has considerable force and ought to be carefully considered and satisfactorily dealt with in any scheme of prohibition that may be brought forward.

6. This is really a question for "experts" in "heredity" to answer. As a layman one might safely say that very little is really known about the inherited characteristics of drunkards to allow of an enunciation of dogmatic opinion on the subject.

7. As stated in my answer to question III, the ultimate aim should be to reduce the evil of drink to the lowest limits capable of attainment by human agency. When the problem is thus considered from a broad standpoint, legislative prohibition, complete or partial, is obviously not the only method of dealing with drink. I would reject no method which promises to be reasonably effective in proportion to the cost involved and which the country can afford. Within limits legislative enactment undoubtedly proves to be beneficial and it will always be the most important weapon that the temperance reformer will have in view. Simultaneously, however, ceaseless propaganda work, without terrorism, will do a lot for the cause and it should be constantly carried on chiefly by non-official agency.

8. In view of the answer to question 3 this question need not be answered.

9. The answers to the next question will cover this one.

10. (*a*) I support this and it is actually being put in practice from the beginning of this year.

(*b*) I support this.

(*c*) I support this, but the obvious limits to the reduction of shops should be kept in mind.

(*d*) I support this.

(*e*) I support this.

(*f*) I support this. There should be no liquor shop in the vicinity of (i) a big factory, (ii) a school or temple or other place of worship, (iii) important main roads. The aim in fact should be to lessen the opportunity of getting drink for those who are not yet definitely habituated to the use of it.

(*g*) I support this.

(*h*) I support this.

(*i*) No one under 18 should be served a drink.

(*j*) Temperance work, carried on by whatever agency, should be encouraged. But I deprecate the use of public funds raised by taxation in connection with this work.

(*k*) This method may judiciously be tried and I think it will prove effective in checking the evil.

I think this list exhausts almost all the methods which have been suggested to control the liquor traffic. Each one of the methods suggested will prove effective—*within limits*—and the important point in my opinion is to take careful account of the *limits* beyond which the law of diminishing returns comes into operation and the remedy ceases to be effective at all or engenders worse evils than those which it seeks to eradicate. The problem, in fact, in my

opinion, should be approached from a purely practical utilitarian point of view and each or all of these remedies should be gradually applied and the result of the experiment carefully watched. There should be no prepossession or bias either for or against any particular method, the only test of the desirability of the method being the carefully analysed results that may be observed.

11. Generally speaking I am in favour of the introduction of "local option". In this way an excellent opportunity is given to the given locality to go "dry" or regulate the traffic in any way it likes to suit local conditions. The application of this principle, however, owing to the existence of large masses of illiterate and apathetic people, presents many difficulties and it is possible that in the course of the very difficult process of ascertaining the real wishes of a locality, the vocal and active few may be able to impose their will on a much larger body of their less noisy opponents in a matter where their comfort and health are gravely at stake. There is also the practical problem of carrying out restrictions and preventing abuses where one locality goes "dry" and the neighbouring one remains wet. In spite of these difficulties, however, I hold that the principle of local option may be given an honest trial. The ideal method of ascertaining the wishes of the public would be by a special plebiscite taken on the definite issue raised for the time being. But such a method would probably require very elaborate preparation and precautions to prevent frauds and malpractices.

12. I advocate the conferment of certain powers of control on the local bodies as a means of carrying out the principle of "local option". In this connection, however, I must say that these powers should be conferred only after the constitution of these bodies has undergone a thorough revision so as to suit the trend of modern democratic opinion.

As far as one can judge from the signs visible at present it appears that most local bodies, if given the necessary powers, will declare unmistakably for "prohibition" or other measures very nearly approaching "prohibition". This tendency to go "dry" will be even more pronounced if it is unaccompanied by any responsibility to bear the consequences of any loss of revenue that will surely ensue. I therefore strongly advocate that if local bodies are invested with the powers of control over the liquor traffic, such powers must always be accompanied by the responsibility to make good the financial deficit thus caused. Such a coupling of responsibility with power will not only prevent a light-hearted use of the power but will also serve to bring home to the people the essentials of modern democratic government.

13. Barring exceptions, the existing Advisory Committees have not worked well and have satisfied nobody. In most cases the complaint has been that the advice tendered has not been acted upon and it is easy to realize why the advice given by such bodies could not be accepted. The position in fact has been unsatisfactory both from the point of view of the members of the committees and the Government officers who have to take the responsibility for accepting or rejecting the advice of these committees. In view of the answers given to questions 11 and 12 I suggest that the Advisory Committees may well be abolished.

14. I think there is no dispute now as to the evil effects of drink as regards crime and the output of work.

15. The evil of drink cannot be diminished without a sacrifice of revenue. One cannot keep one's cake as well as eat it. If the country wants temperance it can have it, provided it pays the necessary price. This price in the present state of the country will undoubtedly be a heavy one and there will probably be many who would regard the price (resultant on the introduction of prohibition or something approaching it) as too heavy to pay in proportion to the gain in the country's morals. There is no doubt that excise revenue will diminish very considerably in the next few years and I would suggest that to make up for its loss taxes on other kinds of consumption will have to be devised. A special education tax in the shape of an additional anna to the Local Fund may be levied. This question of taxation to make up for loss of excise revenue is a very difficult and complex one and I am afraid I cannot answer it fully at short notice.

16. I think the traffic in opium and hemp drugs is under sufficient control at present and I have no great changes to propose; the effect of any restrictions in the consumption of liquor on the use of these drugs by the public should, however, be carefully watched.

17. The practice of giving small doses of opium to children is prevalent in all classes—especially among the poorer labouring classes—where the mother goes away to a factory to earn something, leaving the children to the care of strangers. This custom must be having a deleterious effect on the health of the children, but as I am not aware of exact data on the subject I am unable to give any useful opinion on the nature and extent of the evil.

In conclusion, I may perhaps make a few remarks of a general character. Everybody is anxious to reduce or stop the drink evil. It is also common ground that this cannot be done without loss of the revenue derived from the drink traffic. The real problem is to devise means to carry out the desired end. If the country is prepared to pay a very heavy price, perhaps the evil can be wholly eradicated, but as no country in the world has command of unlimited finance one must be satisfied with some sort of a compromise and decide not only what the country *wants* but what it can *afford* to have. In view of this supreme consideration, I suggest that the problem of temperance should be approached in an entirely unbiassed frame of mind and the

various measures should be applied simultaneously or one after another so as to give the maximum good result. Each one of the remedies suggested becomes an evil if carried too far and the attempt should be to devise such a system as will give, on the whole, the best results and which the country can afford. In dealing with drink we are dealing with the innate passions and cravings of human nature and the improvement, to be permanent, must be gradual. I therefore deprecate the sudden application of drastic measures, which, besides being very costly in loss of revenue, ultimately fail to secure the end in view. A steady application of legislative and other kinds of pressure will, I believe, gradually bring the drink evil—if not to the point of actual extinction—at least to as low proportions as we are ever likely to reach in this country.

## ORAL EVIDENCE

Mr. BHARUCHA replied to the President :—" I have not made a special study of the excise question ; it is a matter which every Collector has to take an interest in.

" It might appeal to the people if Government now declare that their policy is gradually to curtail the consumption of liquor so as to reduce it to the lowest magnitude possible. Some people are under the impression that revenue is the first consideration of Government, and in order to remove that impression I do not think there is anything required of Government except to carry on the present policy which they are doing. Of course, if Government is prepared to sacrifice the revenue, they may make any declaration they like. There is really no foundation for the popular opinion that Government has its excise policy based on revenue only ; it appears to be the fashion to decry against the measures of Government.

" I am not conversant with what is happening in big cities, but in rural areas we are very careful as regards the location of liquor shops, and we are closing certain shops wherever it is possible to do so.

" I do not think consumption has been reduced in Thana. One reason for it is that wage earners are getting much more than they used to do before ; the second reason is the ignorance of the people and want of education. There is also an increase in population. As regards what Government have done it may be pointed out that they have introduced the rationing system, after which consumption has remained steady.

" I would give local option to local bodies by statute with safeguards. The village panchayats have not come into existence yet, and we do not know how they will work.

" The power of determining whether a particular liquor shop should or should not be removed should vest in the whole municipality. For the last few years the excise revenue is being earmarked for educational and sanitary purposes, and if this revenue disappears from big towns and cities, my point is that the municipality responsible for closing the liquor shops in its limits should find the money for education, etc., within its own limits, so far as the amount coming to its share is concerned. In the case of local boards, the district local board should have that power. Making good the loss in revenue being one of the conditions precedent to the exercise of the powers of local option, it follows that no steps can be taken by the municipality or local board without consulting the people concerned, and this should be done even if they have got enough funds to make good the loss of revenue.

" Advisory committees consist of two or three gentlemen selected at random by the Collector, who sometimes consults local officers, his subordinates and other respectable gentlemen who come to see him. They are purely advisory bodies, and they form their opinion without any responsibility. For instance, if the gentleman is a perfect teetotaler, in every case he would say " Close the shop ", while, if he is not in touch with the liquor drinking public, and if he does not take much interest, his opinion would not be of great value. I have found that their opinion is sometimes given in a very haphazard fashion. They do not take care to go to the particular village and examine the situation very carefully so far as the interests of the people are concerned. I have no objection to their functions being made executive ; but if the municipalities and local boards are given powers of local option, there will be no necessity for these committees.

" There are no rules with regard to advisory committees, except that meetings are held, and sometimes opinion is invited by circular ; their function is merely to advise regarding the location and removal of shops. There is no regular agenda, but minutes of the meetings are kept, and there is no complaint about it. Sometimes an Assistant Collector is asked to call a meeting.

" If the legislature are prepared to sacrifice the excise revenue of Thana District, for instance, no safeguard need be provided in the matter of local option, except for the reasonable liberty of liquor drinking classes or minorities.

" Minor matters like differences of opinion between a municipality and a local board could be adjusted. "

To Mr. Shepherd :—" I do not mean that the excise revenue of one district should be utilised for the benefit of that district only. "

To the President :—" In the case of a difference of opinion between the local officer and the municipality or the district local board regarding the location or removal of a shop, the deciding authority might well be the Commissioner, and there might be an appeal over the Commissioner's decision to Government.

"When the auction system was introduced, we used to get large amounts as grants for educational purposes. If local boards are going to get the power of closing shops as they like, they should also recognise their responsibility, and an educational cess or whatever you may like to call it should be imposed in that district in lieu of the revenue that may be lost on account of the closing of the shops.

"I do not know whether consumption is larger in urban or rural areas. In my district there are no very big urban areas; it is almost all rural. As regards other areas, there may be other cesses or taxes to impose—something like a shop tax or a paddler tax.

"Not much can be realised by taxing building sites."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"I do not know if caste panchayats and religious heads will co-operate with Government in their policy of prohibition. The mere passing of a resolution is no good; ceaseless propaganda is needed.

"If Government were to abolish the Excise establishment, and yet keep the same number of shops and ration the same quantity of liquor, I do not think the police will be able to perform the duties of the Excise Department without extra establishment.

"When I say that we can have prohibition if the country is prepared to pay the price, I refer merely to the financial question. We must take into account the demoralisation of the people because of illicit distillation which will be very rife; it will be difficult to stamp it out in spite of any amount of money that may be spent. You may minimise consumption of liquor, but I doubt if total prohibition is possible. I do not think moderate drink is an evil, and it is as much the duty of a civilised Government to provide drink in moderation as it is the duty of a civilised Government to provide tobacco."

To Dr. Patil:—"Every man is his own judge as regards moderation in drinking. Selling in bottles would perhaps be a better thing, and the 'off' shops system is preferable, as the family of the drunkard would be able to exert some influence on him at home.

"There is no objection to restricting the possession of foreign liquor to a certain number of bottles, if it is necessary; but my own experience is that there are more drunkards who use country liquor, although the limit of possession is smaller than for people using foreign liquor, and that is perhaps due more or less to want of education.

"Temperance teaching in schools may do some good."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol:—"I think rationing on the whole is good, but there is a certain limit beyond which you will not be able to go. I find that except in the frontier shops between Thana and Daman or Dharampur rationing is not bad. It limits the licensee to a certain number of gallons per month, and I have personally refused applications for an advance from the next month's ration. The result is that next month he sees that there is no excessive drinking in his shop. But there is a limit, because if there is a demand and if you do not meet it, there are many sources from which illicit distillation and importation will commence which it is difficult to detect in Thana District, especially in the monsoon."

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai:—"During the picketing movement, no instances of breaches of law on the part of licensees have come to my notice. Boys under 16 are very rarely served liquor.

"If a referendum is to be taken, women and non-drinkers should have no right to vote. The best thing is to leave the matter to the local bodies. If they can work it with the safeguards it will be all right. No uniform practice need be laid down for all districts, as they differ more or less. For instance, in Thana District drinking is enormous; the jungle tribes and macchis (fishermen) who work in the creeks would suffer in health if they did not have a dram after the nights they have spent on boats, or during the malarial season in jungles.

"Local fund cess would be paid only by those who own land. In Thana 50 per cent. of the people are labourers, and they would not be touched. As regards a tax on the export of rice from Thana, it is a very big question of policy, and I have not studied it carefully. There will be illicit distillation from sugarcane, toddy, rice, etc., if all the shops are closed in Thana. The best thing is to reduce the drinking in excess, which is evil. If drink is restricted to a certain extent, and if local bodies take upon themselves to adjust the financial situation, I do not see why the drink evil should not be reduced to reasonable dimensions. I am not against prohibition, but I say it is impossible. Gradually, you may do a lot of good. You may keep it as an ideal, but it is difficult for human minds to see ahead more than a few years. Five to ten years is enough."

No. 129.

REPLIES OF MR. A. O. KOREISHI, COLLECTOR OF WEST KHANDESH.

1.—Collector, West Khandesh. I was also Deputy Collector since April 1902.

2.—(*a*) Good, but it ought to be better and conform to the notions and sentiments of an Eastern people.

(*b*) The actual results have not been satisfactory and it cannot be said to have put any effective check on intemperance or the extension of the vice.

3.—The Government of India's policy has been dictated on the assumption that moderate drinking is no vice and it is not the business of the State to control drinking in moderation. In the East, there is a consensus of opinion that drinking is a vice and the eastern sentiment is all against it, both from the moral as well as the religious point of view. Climatically drinking is not only not a necessity but positively injurious in the hot climate of India. As a means of improving on the policy of Government, I would therefore suggest prohibition in the area where materials for illicit distillation do not exist or are scarce, and temperance in the area where such materials exist and where the population consists mostly of people addicted to drinking, *e. g.*, Bhils, Kolis, Bhandaris, etc.

4.—I am in favour of total prohibition, for drink is an evil, a vice, a sin according to the notions of a majority of the people that inhabit this land. It is immoral as well as irreligious and is rightly described in Arabic as 'Um-mul-Khabais' or 'Mother of all evils'. It destroys health as well as wealth and is morally, physically and economically indefensible. I consider it a practical measure which can be accomplished by an earnest and benevolent Government helped by the co-operation of the people, as has been done in some countries.

The steps to attain this goal should be—

*First:* Prohibition should be the ideal to be attained.

*Second:* With this end in view, it might be prohibited in areas with little or no facilities for distillation and rationing to the extent of a 10 per cent. decrease every year should be introduced in the zones where the policy of temperance is adopted.

5.—(*a*) This facility does not exist everywhere and illicit distillation being adjudged a crime will be gradually weeded out by the combined force of the preventive staff and the enlightened will of the people, as every good citizen would gradually range himself on the side of Government. License offers facilities for drink which no-license cannot, and does it not stand to reason that considerably fewer people will have recourse to illicit distillation under the perpetual fear of detection and consequent imprisonment? To a certain extent, there would be illicit distillation and the law would be broken, but what law is not broken more or less? Has gambling disappeared because gambling has been adjudged an offence or has prostitution disappeared because it has been adjudged an offence in some countries? Do not thefts take place because stealing is an offence under the Penal Code? Every Government ought to be prepared for the breakage of law to a certain extent and must look to the guardians of law and the preventive staff for its suppression and must not throw up the sponge out of imaginary fears however real or in despair.

(*b*) Indian States usually take their cue and shape their policies according to the British policy and it is extremely likely that the Indian States and even the Portuguese authorities would gradually adopt the British policy, either by themselves or by negotiation. Government do negotiate for shopless zones with the Indian States and they can still continue to do so. Even if the States do not acquiesce, the areas exposed to smuggling would be a very small percentage of the total British area. In any case a very good beginning will have been made over a greater portion of British territory.

(*c*) There is not much to fear on this score. The State exists for the moral well-being of the community and any steps taken to that end should be done with confidence. Even the moderate drinkers will gradually be ashamed to ask for the provision of a vice and if there is discontent, it will only be that of the vicious and immoral, to which Government ought to pay no heed.

(*d*) The present preventive staff combined with the assistance of the police and the village panchayets and public opinion ought ordinarily to suffice for the prevention of illicit distillation and no additional staff need be maintained.

(*e*) There is very little danger of people doing this.

6.—I fully agree with this view, as the younger generation will grow up without any acquaintance with this vice.

7.—All prevention of vice or crime must have the sanction of religion or of the State; the former, of course, is more potent. In the present case the sanction of religion does exist both for Hindus and Mussalmans, and if the State enacts prohibitive legislation, it will come on the top of their religious prohibition. All other means will only be of minor importance, *e. g.*, lectures and propaganda work by social leagues or suitable lessons introduced in the Vernacular readers, etc.

8.—I would apply the prohibition to all liquors, both foreign and country, distilled or fermented. Toddy in a fermented state, which is less injurious, may be allowed for a time. but the aim should be to prohibit this as well.

9.—This question does not arise in the case of my view which is for prohibition.

10.—All these measures should be adopted in the area where there are facilities for illicit distillation, and where I recommend a scheme of temperance to start with. In areas where liquor is imported, preventive policy will be necessary.

11.—I am in favour of the principle of local option in case prohibition is not introduced. can best be taken by ascertaining the enlightened opinion of the village community.

12.—Local bodies may be invested with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, and if Government cannot tap any other source of raising the revenue, I would make these bodies responsible for raising a part of the revenue that would be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers in their areas.

13.—These have been useful in their own way to a certain extent, but there ought to be more non-official representation on such committees.

14.—In India, the evil of drink possibly does not contribute directly to an increase in crime to the same extent as in Western countries, but it certainly does a great deal to increase crime indirectly. Drink leads to penury and penury to crime and cruelty at home. Similarly it has great effect on the output of work as it saps the physical stamina of the people and lessens their vitality. Small output necessarily restricts monetary resources and the resulting pennilessness leads again to crime.

15.—I would recommend the following sources to partially recoup the loss that Government would sustain by the extinction of excise revenue :—

1. Higher import tariff (and the Government of India may be requested to surrender a part of it as local Governments are responsible for the upkeep and development of ports).
2. Increase in the local cess by three to six pies in the rupee.
3. No freedom from school fees for persons who can well afford to pay. I mean there should be no entirely free education for the well-to-do.
4. Retrenchment in the present-day top heavy establishments.
5. All persons who pay no land revenue or income-tax but whose income is above 600 a year should be asked to contribute to the exchequer their quota, as these are the persons who would benefit most by the saving they would effect by the abolition of liquor traffic.

16.—I would prohibit the use of hemp drugs and opium, except for medical purposes.

17.—The custom of giving opium to young children is largely prevalent amongst the peasant and working classes who drug their children with opium in order to be free to go out for work and labour in the fields. I cannot state what effect it has on the death-rate of children, but I presume it is considerable.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. KOREISHI replied to the President :—I have been Collector of West Khandesh for about a year and a half, and have some experience of the administration of Indian States.

" It would be a good thing if Government declared that their policy was the attainment of prohibition by gradual restriction.

" I do not know the details of the introduction of prohibition in Bhopal and Bhavnagar. It is true that some of the States get a large revenue from the liquor traffic, especially in the Bhil areas. If any of the States do not wish to give up the excise revenue and do not wish to come into line with the British policy of prohibition or restriction, there will be a certain amount of illicit importation, and we will have to keep a strong preventive staff on the frontiers. I am not aware of any treaty obligations under which the States could be compelled to follow British policy in this respect.

" Among some classes, especially the Bhils, they would rather forego their food or anything else, provided they have their drink, and the only way to control them is to gradually wean them away from the habit. As a preliminary towards that end, the Mhowra Act may be introduced and facilities for distillation taken away.

" Some retrenchment could be effected by the abolition of the posts of Deputy Inspectors-General of Police and the Chief Conservator of Forests.

" Advisory committees may consist of two-thirds elected majority. Up to now the members have been non-entities ; they are not very well educated and carry no influence, and in the villages it will be extremely difficult to get good men. Therefore, there may be advisory committees for the district, and they may be given licensing powers subject to the veto of the Collector ; there should be the right of appeal to the Minister. The committees may have powers to decide the location and number of shops, removal of shops, hours of sale, etc. They should not be given any power to see if there are any breaches of the law. The people concerned may be informed of the steps a committee may take ; it is not necessary to take a referendum. There may be a representative of the drinking classes on the committee, and the local board electors may elect the rest of the members. Recognised temperance associations may also be represented. "

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I was in Junagad for some time, but I was not connected with the excise administration, and am not aware of any cases of smuggling, when prohibition was adopted there.

"The Mhowra Act is not yet in operation in West Khandesh. In years of famine and scarcity mhowra flowers are used as food to a certain extent, and in famine years Government may withdraw the Act.

"After the introduction of the auction system, excise inspectors have not much to do in the way of visiting shops, but they are necessary for the prevention of illicit distillation and smuggling. If excise administration were to be transferred to the Revenue Department, I do not think it will in any way be an improvement on the present state of things, as mostly the headmen of the villages do co-operate with the Excise Department.

"The tax on incomes of Rs. 600 a year may be called by any other name than income tax, in order that it may not go to the Government of India."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol:—"My proposal is not a surcharge on the income tax; it is a tax on incomes between Rs. 600 and Rs. 2,000. If the local cess is increased by one anna, it may bring in about Rs. 25 lakhs.

To Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai:—"The present policy of Government has not been a success, possibly because more attention has been paid to revenue, but the Collector generally takes into consideration the convenience of the people who drink in moderation.

"In West Khandesh about 5 to 10 per cent. of the people are Mahomedans; many of them do not drink, but there are Mahomedan liquor shopkeepers.

"The restrictions on liquor should not apply to Europeans and other foreigners, because drinking is a regular habit with them.

"I am not in favour of any indirect tax on food grains and other articles of necessity, as non-drinkers will have to suffer for the sake of drinkers. I would have no objection to taxing drinkers, and such a tax may be abolished when we are able to make up the loss of excise revenue in other ways."

To Mr. Jadhav:—"Foreign liquor should also be rationed; otherwise there will be an increase in its consumption when only country liquor is rationed. I am told that the prices of country and foreign liquor are now almost equal."

To Dr. Patil:—"I am not aware if the Bhils use tea instead of liquor on marriage feasts. In West Khandesh, if prohibition comes on at once, they will decidedly take to illicit distillation. The Bhils drink on account of ignorance, and they cannot be educated in the sense in which ordinary people receive secondary education or college education.

"Some educated Mahomedans also drink, especially the England-returned men.

"Temperance teaching in schools may be of some good, but you will also be imparting knowledge to young children about a thing of which they know nothing. Liquor shops may be closed on bazar and pay days.

"I think it is impossible to supply liquor in particular quantities in sealed bottles to moderate drinkers. I am not in favour of the coupon system. It will be expensive, and if the expense is thrown on the shoulders of the drinkers, they may go in for illicit distillation. A drunken man may be punished. In cities the 'on' shop system is better, but in villages the 'off' shop system would be preferable as people have sometimes to walk as much as ten miles to reach a shop."

To Mr. Knight:—"In order to make up the loss of excise revenue, a tax will have to be imposed on the general community. Consumption of liquor is the greatest in industrial cities, and there the tax on incomes that I have suggested may be imposed and in villages where they do not drink much the local cess may be increased; I do not think this will lead to discontent."

No. X. A. D. 92.

Dhulia, 13th June 1923.

From

A. O. KOREISHI, ESQUIRE, M.A., C.S.,

Collector of West Khandesh;

To

THE SECRETARY,

Excise Committee, Bombay.

Sir,

With reference to the copy of my oral evidence recorded by the Excise Committee forwarded to me under 30th May 1923, I have the honour to state that it appears there are several omissions in it and unless the *questions* and *answers* are submitted it is difficult for me to correct the replies given. In some cases, I find some matters are put in which did not emanate from me, *e.g.*, prohibition at Bhavnagar. I did mention Bhopal, but some member of the Excise Committee asked whether there was any other State that had adopted it and some one suggested the name of Bhavnagar. It may be a fact for aught. I know, but I did not mention it. Similarly there are some other matters and I shall be obliged if you will send me a copy of my evidence in the form of Questions and Answers, so that I can at once discern what answer I gave to particular questions.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
A. O. KOREISHI.

x 1366—119

## No. 130.

REPLIES FROM MR. P. A. BAPTISTA, PRESIDENT, BOMBAY EAST INDIAN ASSOCIATIO .

The Bombay East Indian Association of which I am elected the President represents all indigenous Catholics of Bombay, Salsette and Bassein, numbering over 60,000 souls all British subjects.

I was employed for 26 years in a mill, 9 years I served as a manager and retired two years ago. I worked in the Morarjee Gokuldas Mills, Sopari Bag, Parel.

2. The desire of the Government of India of not interfering with the habits of the people, provided moderation is observed, is certainly commendable, but the means adopted to attain that end is very faulty. Monopoly in general is most objectionable and the system of excise pursued by Government seems to me to be pure monopoly. Many other Governments of the world have their excise departments but they leave open to all to apply for permission to distil, ferment and sell respectively their production on payment. I do not think that the policy of the Government has put an effective check on intemperance, and although the policy as defined seems to be in theory a counsel of perfection, in practice it is difficult to carry out, and has increased the consumption and impoverished the people. It puts money into the pockets of the monopolists. The policy has also increased consumption in foreign and other injurious country liquors.

3. The change I would advocate is to stop the importation of all foreign liquors, except for medicinal and religious purpose. I would advocate the entire stoppage of bottling in pints and half pints and in flat bottles which induce a large number to drink clandestinely.

4. (*a*) I am not in favour of immediate total prohibition but I think there should be a gradual reduction of 5 per cent. annually, that in ten years we may have another commission to examine the result of this commission. I would totally prohibit mhowra liquor and permit liquors manufactured from palm trees, jaggery and kaju to be sold in sealed bottles only.

(*b*) The present system of supervision should be continued to check smuggling of goods from Indian States and Portuguese territories into British territories.

6. I entirely agree with the view and feel certain that the hardship will be felt by only one generation.

7. Legislation is not the only means. Temperance associations should also be formed in every village and taluka. I would also suggest that special lectures be given in schools and colleges. Object lesson charts should be placed in schools and no one should be engaged in Government service unless he gives a declaration that he is a teetotaller.

8. I would not prevent the use of shindi or toddy. Fresh toddy is considered to be good and should be allowed. To some it is both food and drink.

10. (*c*) I would reduce the number of shops. No shops be allowed near a factory or a place of worship.

(*d*) The chief means I would advocate is that all liquor shops, whether for foreign or country liquors, *be closed at* 6 *p.m. and be opened at* 10 *a.m.* This is the chief point of my evidence. Not even the first class shops, wholesale or retail, should be kept *open between* 6 *p. m. and* 10 *a.m.* There should be an average limit to purchase. A certain quantity should be issued only to one person. Permitting the opening of shops in a locality should be in accordance with the number of the population.

(*e*) I am also of opinion that the strength of liquor be reduced.

(*g*) I would prohibit the importation of all foreign liquors except wine and beer.

14. I am of opinion that drink does contribute to an increase in crime and has an effect upon the output of work and the well-being of a family.

15. My recommendations will not make absolute extinction of revenue but would reduce it.

I would therefore suggest, (1) reduction in expenditure which is top heavy, (2) all amusement and amusement houses be taxed, (3) the gains of the Turf Club be subject to a 50 per cent. tax, (4) there should be an increase in death or probate tax, (5) there should be a transfer of property tax, and (6) a special tax on all tobacco and biddie shops.

### ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. BAPTISTA replied to the President :—" The majority of the Catholics of Bombay, Salsette and Bassein are moderate drinkers, and if all supply of liquor is stopped gradually there may be some irritation in the beginning, but it can be easily ignored. They spend about Rs. 20 a month each on drink, and the men, women and children all drink, especially on festive occasions ; but there is no religious obligation to drink.

" The general opinion appears to be that mhowra liquor is more harmful than liquor from palm-tree juice, and the former is not so much liked by the people.

" The quantity of liquor supplied to each person may be limited to two ounces, but it will be rather difficult to regulate. The coupon system would not work smoothly.

" About 50,000 out of a total of 60,000 of my community drink liquor ; excluding children under 14, it will be 40,000. Drink is not prohibited in any way, and there is no religious sanction against it. Generally, people after their day's work visit railway restaurants, bars and other liquor shops between 6 and 9, and they should be prohibited from doing so."

" To Rao Saheb Desai :—" About 60 per cent. of the workers in the mills where I was employed were addicted to liquor, and that made them less efficient. Toddy does not affect to the same extent as other liquor, because its strength is very much less, but they won't take more on that account, and I would not personally advise placing any checks on toddy. "

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" If a vote of all the drinkers in the Catholic community were to be taken, I think the majority of them would vote for the closing of liquor shops. "

To Mr. Jadhav :—" I do not like state monopoly, because I would like the profits to be distributed. At the same time the quantity must be restricted. At present all the money does not go into the pockets of Government ; some of it goes into the pockets of some monopolists. If you had distilleries in each district, the particular article which the people of the district like would be used in the manufacture of liquor."

To Dr. Patil :—" Most of the mill workers in Bombay come from the Konkan and in their native place they are not addicted to drink. In Bombay they drink more and more and waste their money, and they suffer in health and working capacity. A good many of them drink daily. The women do not drink. If the shops close to the mills are removed, drunkenness would be decreased.

" Toddy liquor is taken after heating it, probably because it reduces the quantity of alcohol ; fresh toddy is considered to be a medicine and is slightly laxative.

" Liquor shops may be closed on holidays and pay days. The mutton and egg preparations in the shops induce the men to drink more.

" Both the ' off ' and ' on ' systems have their advantages and disadvantages, but the ' off ' system with fixed quantity would be better. The influence of the family will be for good.

" Tobacco and *biddies*, should be taxed all over the Presidency. "

To Mr. Knight :—" Cinemas and other places of amusement may produce Rs. 7 to 8 lakhs, and the Turf Club may yield Rs. 10 to 20 lakhs ; the totalisator is not yet taxed and should be taxed.

" I advocate a reduction of 5 per cent. every year ; after ten years we may take stock and see what the position is, and another committee may be appointed.

" If the mills were to adopt the rule that only non-drinkers would be entertained for service in the mills, it would keep a very large majority out, say, from 75 to 80 per cent."

No. 131.

## Replies of Mr. F. A. C. REBELLO, B.A., J.P., retired Deputy Accountant General, Bombay.

1. I am a Government pensioner, having retired from service as Deputy Accountant General, Bombay. I have taken some interest in social work among the Christians of the Bombay Presidency, particularly of Salsette. In connection with the work of Co-operative Societies, I have moved much among them and come in contact with them.

2. I am of opinion that the excise policy of the Government of India as outlined in the extract given in the questionnaire is the right one. I have observed that intemperance is found more in places where liquor is cheap and facilities for getting it are more. As far as it has gone, the policy as a whole has been successful. Local circumstances have militated against its success particularly in large industrial centres like Bombay and Ahmedabad. This, however, is not the defect of the policy. On the whole the people now drink less in quantity but spend more on drink than they did before. People who are accustomed to a certain quantity of liquor will have it whether it is cheap or dear. On ceremonial occasions like marriages and christenings it is not considered desirable to restrict the quantity. The spread of education, the greater liberty enjoyed by the people, and higher earnings in recent years have led to an increase of drink among some people, but the high price of liquor in villages has led to a decline in consumption. I have, however, heard numerous complaints about the quality of liquor available,—either it is worse in taste, bad in quality, or inferior to the authorised strength.

Though as a general proposition the policy of the Government is what would be the best, in its practical application much remains to be done. From the retailers upwards the idea of the dealers and excise subordinates is to show as good financial results as possible. Encouragements are offered to drink in various ways and in the administration of the department the actual practice does not correspond to the theory. For instance, one of the results of selling shops to the highest bidder is, the shop-keeper having bid for a higher figure, has to encourage drink in various ways in order to earn profit.

I think also that the number of shops and opportunities for drink are now too many, particularly in Cities and Towns. The town population earn more and, owing to the nature of their duties, are more attracted to drink. There is not much fear of illicit distillation in City and Town areas; the number of shops could be further reduced and placed in less prominent positions. There is also much complaint about the quality of liquor supplied.

I consider that the policy of Government has reduced intemperance, but that much more has to be done in order to bring intemperance under proper control. In my opinion, while intemperance has decreased in villages, it has increased in towns. In order to meet this not only negative measures to make drink more costly but some positive measures to encourage abstinence are required.

3. I do not advocate any change in the declared policy, but I would appeal to more effective administration and greater control by public opinion. The location of liquor shops should be specially examined and some general rule evolved about the number of shops allowed to the number of people in towns and to areas in villages. At present sufficient care is not taken to ascertain public opinion in order to prevent complaints about illicit and bad liquor. I would suggest that Indian liquor (like English or other imported liquor) should be bottled when issued out of the distillery or a bonded warehouse, and all the bottles sealed by the Government seal. This would have the effect of making liquor dearer but would stop many of the abuses now complained of; illicit distillation would be easier to detect and the numerous frauds now taking place would be avoided.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition at present. The country is not ready for it; for many reasons I consider that it is an impracticable measure. I fully agree with the objections referred to in question 5. There are many facilities for illicit distillation, because liquor can be manufactured from many natural products including rice, jowari stalk, fruits of various kinds. It would be impossible for Government to prevent transport in various ways and to keep a staff honest enough and able enough to prevent illicit distillation. A little acquaintance with the geography of the Thana and Kanara Districts and the habits of the people is enough to convince one of the correctness of this view.

6. I would not give any weight to this argument; there are no data to support the assumption that prohibition would improve the next generation. Inherited tendencies cannot be rooted out so soon and they reappear in future generations. There is no reason to suppose that facilities for obtaining liquor will not be taken advantage of by future generations if by some chance or other they can get it by illicit means.

7. I do not think that we should aim at complete cessation of the consumption of liquor. In my opinion this is impracticable in the present circumstances of India. I am of opinion that even prohibitive legislation will not stop the consumption of liquor absolutely. Religious sanctions have failed to secure complete prohibition.

8. I would not prohibit the use of toddy at all ; it is desirable to give facilities for the consumption of toddy so as to prevent the consumption of distilled liquors. Toddy is used as food by many.

9. The means which I would suggest to control the consumption are :—

(*a*) Raise the duty gradually so as to come up to the duty on imported liquors.

(*b*) Make the duty uniform in different places of the same province.

(*c*) Bottle the liquor and seal the bottles before issue from the bonded warehouse.

(*d*) Reduce the number of shops still further and have them in proportion to the number of inhabitants.

10. (*a*) I am not in favour of rationing ; this would give rise to several malpractices. It would be difficult to fix the quantities for different shops, having in view variations of seasons, customs, concourse of people (marueejes and pilgrimages) ; there would always be a temptation to get the better of the sanctioned quality.

(*b*) I would equalise the duties on imported liquor and liquor produced in the country and if this is not immediately possible, raise the excise duty gradually.

(*c*) A further reduction in the number of shops is necessary. In Bandra there is a bar on the railway premises and three more shops within half a mile of the railway station. These are positive temptations to the people and should all be abolished. I would not have any shops in densely populated places. The large number of shops between Dhobi Talao and Girgaum are too many. The shops in the mill areas should be away from the mills as far as possible.

(*d*) I would prohibit the retail sale of liquor after 7 p.m. I would close these shops on festival days like Christmas and Ganesh Chaturthi, etc. I would close the shops in mill areas on days on which mill-hands are paid.

(*e*) I would certainly encourage temperance by subsidising properly conducted Temperance Associations ; but before any subsidy is paid it would be necessary to ascertain whether the work of the association was effective.

(*f*) I would not restrict the importation of foreign liquor. Many of foreign liquors serve medical purposes. There is no reason why individual preference should not be respected. Further, it is not possible to get good country liquor at all comparable to the better class of imported liquors.

(*g*) I do not think that any age-limit should be prescribed. It would not be of much use as a preventive.

(*h*) I think that no restriction should be placed against the removal of liquor from shops. Much of the mischief is caused by drinking in company at the shops. Many of the quarrels take place near the liquor shops.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. I would suggest that electors to the Legislative Council should be grouped by wards or villages and allowed option to such groups, taking care that the group does not embrace a large area. In this way people will realise that any decrease of revenue due to the exercise of that option in cancelling shops was due to their own action and the responsibility of additional taxation would be brought home. The opinion of minorities would thus be respected.

12. I would not give the power to Local Boards or Municipalities. I think that this power should rest with the Commissioner acting with the advice of an advisory board for the Presidency. So that different localities may be subjected to impartial and uniform principles.

13. The present advisory committees have been useful. I would add religious ministers in Christian localities, Mahomedan Kazies or other religious preceptors and respected Hindoos who are known for their efforts as regard social service.

14. Certainly. The greater portion of the work of the Bandra Magistrate's Court is the result of excessive drink by people and fighting as a result of it. The output of work is less and many people become totally disqualified. It must, however, be admitted that in small quantities liquor acts as an incentive to additional work.

15. According to the above proposals, excise revenue would be gradually reduced and the normal increase in other sources would cover this gradual decrease. I am of opinion that income tax should be transferred as a provincial source of revenue and the imperial contribution should be fixed at its present rate. Thus, further increase of income tax would cover further losses in excise.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. REBELLO replied to the President :—" The shops that I have complained of exist because they have been there for a long time, and it is difficult to remove them. I would not close them on market days and holidays.

" I do not think it is possible to ration the quantity. It will not be possible to work the coupon system.

" The selection of shops is now done by advisory committees, and their opinion generally prevails. I would give them more powers, and I do not think they will be abused. In local board areas members of local boards may be elected to advisory committees; the same should be the case with municipal areas; the number may be about two or three; Government may nominate two or three persons; there should be some representation for villages, temperance associations, and drinking classes. There would be one advisory committee for the whole district, and its decision should prevail, subject to veto by the Collector, which again should be subject to confirmation by the Commissioner, though I would have no objection to Government having the final word in the matter; but it is not worth while troubling Government in these minor matters.

" Raising the duty or tax is more effective than rationing, and this may be done up to the limit up to which no illicit distillation would take place. If this system is tried when wages are less, probably people will drink less. If rationing could be successfully carried out, which I doubt, I would have no objection to it."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" I belong to a community which comes from South Kanara. In the Christian community, drunkenness prevails more than it ought to be, but Government is not to blame in the matter. If any community were prohibited from drinking, they would object to it strongly. In Bombay there is no illicit distillation, but in the outlying districts there is a good deal of it.

" If prohibition were to be applied to a district where 50 per cent. of the people are addicted to drink, the drinking of illicitly distilled liquor will be more than what it was before prohibition was introduced.

" If by controlling country liquor people take to foreign liquor, the import duty on foreign liquor may be increased.

" By reducing shops, there may be a rush at the remaining shops, but people will not drink more."

To the Rev. Mr. Macnicol :—" I do not agree with the view that a large majority of Catholics would vote in favour of the closing of liquor shops. I think they would object to it very strongly. I am referring to the Goan community when I say that; also the East Indian community in Salsette would object very strongly to liquor being completely prohibited."

To Dr. Patil :—" Drinking to excess is bad. Take the case of a man of my age; many doctors advise him a glass of whisky in the evening to help digestion. Why should he be prohibited from having it? I admit there is in that way a craving for it, but it is on the same lines as craving for tea or tobacco or any other substance, and it does not follow that everything for which there is a craving should be prohibited.

" Drink is spreading on account of education, but prohibition is not the precaution to be taken against it. Stricter measures than at present should be adopted, but no change in the policy is needed.

" Intemperance has decreased in villages, because the prices are high. Illicit distillation will take place where there are facilities; it depends on the locality. Intemperance in towns can be decreased by reducing the quantity, raising the tax, and rationing, if it is possible."

To the President :—" The shops in Dhobi Talao are a great evil; they should be reduced, about Rs. 13 lakhs worth of liquor is consumed there annually and three-fourths of the people who resort to them are Christians."

To Dr. Patil :—" The 'off' shops system would be better. Mutton and egg preparations act as stimulants for drink."

To Mr. Knight :—" To a certain extent my suggestion about local option means that if a group of villages decide upon closing some liquor shops, they will have to raise an equivalent amount of tax to meet the deficit in excise revenue, which would mean a reduction in their educational grants, and their responsibility would be brought home to them.

" Part of the decrease in excise revenue would be covered by the prosperity of the people when drink is reduced. There is a lot of waste of income of the labouring classes due to excessive drinking. Decrease in consumption of liquor will enable the mill hand to earn more, and he could pay some income tax. The Government of India may be asked to allow the Bombay Government a larger share out of the income tax. The mill hand would also buy more land in his native place, and will thus indirectly contribute towards Government revenues. If you go on decreasing liquor by slow degrees, it is likely that prosperity will increase to such an extent that other sources of revenue would come in. I would take no steps to cover the deficit in each year, and I think this can be effected without introducing any additional taxation."

## No. 132.

### Replies (in Gujarati) of Mr. FRAMJI RUSTOMJI HAVAVALA of Nargol (Thana District).

1. I, Framji Rustomji, a Zoroastrian, aged 70 and an agriculturist by occupation, am an inhabitant of Mouze Nargol, Peta Umbargaon, District Thana. I am the managing trustee of the Parsi Panchayat, Nargol, and hold land in Umbargaon and in 8 to 10 villages situate on the seashore and the forest strip of the Dahanu Taluka on which I pay Rs. 1,000 as land revenue to Government. I cultivate the land by employing day labourers, also by farming fields to tenants. These cultivators belong to the *Varli*, *Dubla*, *Kokni* and *Dhodya* communities. I have personal knowledge of the customs and the habits of eating and drinking of these men and on the strength of it I answer the questions.

2. I do not hold that the policy enunciated in the Resolution of the Government of India dated the 7th September 1905 and the changes made in it subsequently have checked effectively intemperateness or affected it in any appreciable degree ; only pure liquor as it could be obtained formerly has now become unobtainable, whereas revenue has increased considerably and the public have to suffer several hardships unnecessarily. By the reduction in the number of shops the cause of temperance has not gained in the least, because by such reduction the sale of the neighbouring shop-keepers increases in equal proportion and those living at a distance purchase liquor in excess and keep the requisite stock in their houses for consumption. The policy of Government not to interfere with the temperate habits of the public is right and it should be maintained.

3. The custom of indulging in drink is very old. It is not harmful to the temperate drinker in respect of his health or otherwise. But some of the methods adopted by Government for the distillation and the sale of liquor are bad and injurious. Prior to the enactment of the Abkari Act and for many years after its coming into force, the public could get fully distilled and pure liquor. Many places had distilleries to distil it and the liquor distilled there contained no water. At present many distilleries have been closed and they are maintained only at a few places in respect whereof monopolies have been given. Under-Proof liquor is not distilled in them as it used to be done before, but Over-Proof liquor, *i.e.*, very strong liquor, is distilled. Such distilled liquor comes from very distant places to the Taluka depôt and its strength is reduced there to 25°, 30° or 60° U. P. as required by mixing water with it. By the admixture of water the liquor gets spoiled in a short time. Firstly, the mixing of water is regarded objectionable from the point of religion by some, and secondly, such liquor begins to get spoiled after a few days, on account of which it is harmful to health. As the drinkers do not get pure liquor they have no other help but to drink such bad liquor. Arrangements should, therefore, be made for the supply of pure distilled liquor by substituting the old method of distilling liquor in place of the present one. The distillation of very strong liquor should also be stopped. Formerly pure liquor of 50° or 70° U. P. used to be distilled and supplied. Liquor of that type should be distilled. The prohibition of the manufacture of liquor from toddy and its sale is also improper. The liquor made from toddy is milder than that made from *mhowras*. Government should, accordingly, establish distilleries under their own control in toddy producing centres, distil from it liquor of from 50° to 70° U. P. and supply it. If that is done the consumption of it will neither harm the (drinkers') health nor affect the Government revenue.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition. The use of liquor is in vogue amongst the people and especially amongst the poor classes from centuries and it is prevalent amongst all classes of Hindus, except Brahmins and Banias. The number of temperate drinkers far exceeds that of the intemperate. The number of the intemperate is so very small that it may be neglected. The prohibition of it is, therefore, not only unnecessary, but the action will amount to interference with the needs and liberty of the temperate drinkers. The poor and labour classes drink liquor moderately in order to get rid of fatigue and to find rest. It, therefore, does not harm them. Under the circumstances it is not fair to bring hardship on them by prohibition. Further, the physique and the health of the temperate drinkers are not in any way inferior to those of the abstainers. On the contrary, the former are found to be stronger in that respect.

5. I am not in favour of either total or partial prohibition. The evil consequences of the adoption of that policy would be that liquor will begin to be manufactured from materials other than those from which it is distilled at present; it will also be illicitly distilled from *mhowras* and the smuggling of it from the Indian States and Portuguese territory would commence, which it would be impracticable to check. Total prohibition will further cause severe discontent, as it will interfere with certain habits and social customs of the people. Besides great expenditure will be required to be made to provide machinery for the prevention of illicit distillation and smuggling; corruption will also increase and the people will take to other harmful and injurious intoxicants.

6. The argument which is often advanced that, though prohibition may not prove beneficial to the present generation, it will benefit the posterity, is entirely without foundation. Good education coupled with the sense of morality roused by moral teachings can alone influence the intemperate to be temperate.

7. No restriction in respect of the temperate is necessary. Moreover, it is impossible to check drinking even if prohibitive legislation is made and expensive machinery provided for its prevention.

8. It would be reasonable to think of improving the drunkards by imposing some restriction on drunkenness, but the prohibition of drink will not improve them at all. On the contrary, it will bring hardship on the temperate. Further, there should be no restriction in regard to fermented and unfermented drinks like toddy. There is a vast difference between distilled liquor and raw toddy. Toddy is a staple food of the poor and an enjoyment for the rich. It has very little of intoxicating property. But, on the other hand, it has several beneficial properties. And on that account Government have classed it separately from liquor. Though, as in the case of liquor, there are no severe regulations, duty and other restrictions laid down in regard to toddy, some of the existing regulations are such that they amount to increased levy of taxation in the shape of duty, license fee and the grant of a license by auction. Consequently, adulteration of water and other things is made in that harmless drink, and it has become dear. It is undoubtedly true that the poor are not tempted to drink liquor so long as they get toddy. On that account, heavy duty on it, heavy license fee and the auction system in regard to it should be abolished in order that the public may be less tempted to drink distilled liquor. Some of the liquor drinkers become addicted to drinking and become drunkards. The same does not happen in the case of toddy drinkers, because toddy is not available in all the seasons ; especially in the monsoon it is not at all available. It is found from experience that in the time of famine also, it makes up for the insufficiency of food. Toddy, whether fermented or unfermented, does not harm the health of the people. Restrictions and duties on such necessaries of life for the poor should, therefore, be relaxed, and the auction system should be abolished. The conception of the advocates of temperance and other persons that toddy begins to decay five or six hours after it is tapped from trees is entirely erroneous. It is drunk without harm for three or four days in the winter and for two days in the summer. It begins to get sour thereafter naturally. If it does not contain any adulteration of water, etc., it does not decay at all, but vinegar which is so useful to the people is made from it. Its alcoholic property does not increase after 48 hours. Stale toddy is unquestionably not bad. Accordingly, the advice which the advocates of temperance give that toddy should not be allowed to be sold five or six hours after it is tapped from trees is not at all beneficial, but on the contrary it is harmful. Such restrictions in regard to it should, therefore, be abolished. If that is done, then only the public will be prevented from taking to distilled liquor. Besides, molasses and vinegar, which are useful commodities, are made from it from olden times. It is, therefore, wise that its trade should be made free.

9. Gradual prohibition is not at all desirable. No measures in regard to it are therefore necessary.

10. The remedial measures (*b*), (*c*), (*i*) and (*k*) from amongst those suggested to control the consumption of liquor are unnecessary and harmful and should be dropped.

(*d*) Suitable hours should be fixed for sale and shops should be ordered to be closed when a disturbance is apprehended.

(*e*) Liquor should be reduced in strength and made sufficiently mild, *i.e.*, it should be 50° or 70° U. P. It should be well distilled and unadulterated and only such liquor should be sold. No water should be mixed in it, and the auction system should be abolished altogether.

(*g*) The importation and sale of foreign liquor should be restricted.

(*f*) The views of the Temperance Associations are incongruous with the condition of the public. They need not, therefore, be encouraged. But lessons in temperance should be taught to children in schools and suitable men should be appointed to give lectures in it.

11. No benefit has accrued and will never accrue from local option.

12. There is no necessity to give powers to local bodies, such as municipalities and local boards, to determine the number and location of shops within their respective areas. The question should be left to the wishes of the people. The Revenue and Abkari officers possess more knowledge in that regard and it is better that the matter is dealt with in consultation with them.

13. It is not in essence true that the present advisory committees have proved useful. The matter is doubtful. Such committees are therefore unnecessary. Government officials are more qualified to deal with the matter in accordance with the needs and wishes of the people.

14. The drink evil has no share in the increase of crimes relating to murder nor has it any connection with the unemployment.

15. To tap other sources of income to make up the deficit caused by the absolute extinction of the Excise revenue will be improper and oppressive. I cannot recommend that. Moreover by so doing there will be no increase in Government revenue, but, on the contrary, the Government will have to undergo great expenditure in order to provide machinery for the prevention of offences which will be an unnecessary loss to the exchequer.

16. It is fit to prohibit and restrict the use of *bhang* and opium.

17. The custom of giving opium to young children is not largely prevalent. It is prevalent only amongst the high classes. I am unable to say what effect this custom has on the death-rate among children.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. HAVAVALA replied to the President :—" An ordinary man can take quarter of a bottle, *i.e.*, 6 ounces of country liquor 30 U. P. or half a bottle, *i.e.*, 12 ounces 60 to 70 U. P. in a day. Any increase in that quantity will bring on intoxication, but I do not think Government should take steps to prevent excess in drinking because those who drink in excess are very small in number, the majority being moderate drinkers. I do not accept it as true that people begin in moderation and then go to excess. In my opinion, reduction or increase of shops has no effect on temperance. I do not agree that there is an increase of intemperance. A man who drinks to excess does it from the very start.

" Before the Abkari Act was introduced, we were allowed to distil liquor ourselves. I am still doing the business of selling toddy, but I have given up the business of selling liquor, because the addition of water is considered by the Hindus as interfering with their religion.

" The method of distilling and selling liquor has much deteriorated at present. Formerly there were distilleries in the districts, in which liquor was distilled of whatever proof required and was sold in shops pure, without the admixture of water. Many of these distilleries have been abolished ; the number now in existence is small. The liquor distilled there is strong and over-proof and is transported to taluka depôts from long distances and diluted with water till it is reduced to the strength required. Liquor thus diluted degenerates and becomes insipid and injurious to health."

To Dr. Patel :—" Hindus do take milk at our hands, even if it is adulterated with water. Some people drink to excess during Holi and Diwali, but it is not such a great evil as to require interference. Most of my workmen drink toddy. Liquor is drunk in the evening. The majority of people heat toddy before taking it, but liquor distilled from toddy is not heated before being drunk. People drink toddy from morning till evening. Toddy in moderation would make a man work better.

" I cannot say that liquor is absolutely necessary, but it refreshes a man and gives him pleasure if taken in small quantities after work in the evening. A teetotaler does not feel the necessity for it. Moderate drinking makes a man more energetic. Drinking to excess may be made punishable."

*Supplementary statement furnished by the witness after his oral evidence.*

It is not desirable to prohibit liquor partially or totally. It is healthy if taken in moderation and the number of moderate drinkers far exceeds that of drunkards, who are very few. It is highly unreasonable to harass and restrict the liberties of the majority for the sake of the few. It will be advantageous both to Government as well as to the people to enforce the present abkari policy with the few modifications I suggest below :—

1. The practice of distilling spirits over-proof and then diluting it with water should be abolished and the districts should be supplied again with distilleries where liquor can be manufactured of the strength required. It should be distilled 50 to 70 U. P. and sold without the admixture of water. The present still head duty should be reduced a little.

2. If it is desired to reduce drunkenness, it should be penalised by law, the drunkard being punished either with stripes, fines or simple imprisonment. It is hopeless to reduce drunkenness by increasing the duty. The drunkard will drink even if the liquor costs Rs. 5 a bottle, throwing unnecessary burden on the innocent moderate drinker.

3. Palm juice liquor is supervious and less injurious to health than mhowra liquor. Distilleries for the manufacture of this liquor should be established in the districts where palm trees grow.

4. The present system of auctioning should be stopped altogether.

## No. 133.

### Replies of the Central Labour Board, Bombay.

1. The Central Labour Board is a big labour institution to which are affiliated four of the largest Trade Unions in Bombay, *viz.*, the Postmen and Packers' Union, the Port Trust Workmen's Union, the G. I. P. Railway Workmen's Union and the B. B. & C. I. Railway Workmen's Union. The Board consisting as it largely does of labour workers and pure labourers may claim to voice the representative views of labour on the question of drink.

2. I regret to say that the excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 has totally failed in practice. However smart in its expression, it has not contributed to any effective results, on the contrary due to its inefficacy no section of the people has been more gravely affected than the labouring class. All considerations of revenue have to be absolutely subordinated to the furtherance of Government's policy, while in reality a very large fund of Government's revenue is drawn from the Excise Department that sucks the very life blood of the poor working class. Government's policy has failed to reduce the total consumption and to evolve a character of temperance among the people though the purport conveyed by the wording of the policy is to that effect. In a question like that of drink Government can efficaciously control the evil by wisely putting into force the spirit of the policy. Intemperance has considerably increased among workmen, the majority of whom have been spending the increase in wages in drink. The number of the liquor shops in industrial areas has not been restricted in Bombay.

3. The Government ought definitely to progress towards the goal of total prohibition and show by practice what they desire. Even though it may be held that the revenue would suffer and there would be a good deal of illicit distillation, yet the goal cannot be disregarded. The mhowra flowers from which at present the alcoholic preparations are made can be turned to a better use, say for making power alcohol. The instances of some states in America, *e.g.*, Chili and Uruguay, may be quoted to advantage where the revenue has not suffered nor has illicit distillation thriven.

4. I am entirely in favour of total prohibition to be achieved by gradual measures to be slowly but effectively taken. The reasons are the moral and material advancement of the country as a whole. It is unwise to say that the adoption of the measures of total prohibition is impracticable. It is so much of human will that is needed to be brought into operation. If a perceptibly large number of people can afford to live without any stimulus of an alcoholic nature, it is quite possible and practicable for all to do so. The steps that can best be followed are :—

(*a*) the spread of education among the masses,

(*b*) encouragement to Temperance Societies,

(*c*) Government's determined action in the direction of propaganda work against the vice of drink,

(*d*) a heavy excise tariff so as to make in many cases the practice of drinking prohibitively costly.

5. (*a*) and (*b*) If other articles can be successfully stopped from becoming illicit, alcohol can as well be stopped.

(*c*) When a practice is believed to be pernicious it can be easily put a stop to. The evil custom of suttee was in spite of all opposition stopped.

(*d*) Even if a preventive establishment large enough to cope with illicit distillation everywhere be found expensive it may be given a trial, for our aim and object should be the total suppression of the evil at any cost in the initial stage which would be recorded in the course of time by the increased productive capacity of the people. The establishment must be under the management of representatives of both official and non-official members who will not stoop to illegal exactions.

(*e*) Other intoxicants are not so dangerous in their effects and when an organised method is adopted of uprooting the principal evil other intoxicants will naturally come to an end.

6. The present generation will decidedly greatly benefit themselves from gradual and progressive prohibition. But the future generations will derive greater benefits.

7. Government must play their part in the matter of total prohibition. Even if legislative enactment were a necessity, I would be glad to enforce it.

8. Yes, all intoxicants should be brought under the ban.

9. I hold to the view that absolute prohibition is a desideratum. It can be achieved by reducing the quantity and raising the costs.

10. I agree to all.

11. Yes. I am in favour of local option through municipalities, district and taluka boards and village panchayats.

12. Yes. I would favour the municipalities and similar local bodies to be invested with deserving powers in the matter of control, but they should not be made responsible for raising part of the sacrificed revenues.

13. No. The existing advisory committees have not been able to exercise healthy powers to arrive at any appreciable results.

14. Decidedly, drink evil does promote crime. Drink reduces output and efficiency and is the chief cause of absenteeism. It has ruined many lives.

15. Revival of forest industry and retrenchment in Civil and other services. The provinces should get a share in the income tax.

16. The use of hemp and opium has decreased since Government began controlling them. Therefore control upon them is desirable.

17. Only among the backward classes is the use of giving opium to children more current. It has an adverse effect upon the health of the children. Education among the masses will tend to bring an end to the evil.

At the end if some general suggestions are allowed to be made especially in connection with labourers, I would urge upon Government the necessity of their advising large employers of labour to provide for the following necessities :—

(*a*) Encouragement to be given to non-drinkers by rapid promotion, prizes, etc.

(*b*) Shops of ærated waters and tea shops should be opened by them near the work houses.

(*c*) Penalty upon the people if they come to the shops previously having drunk liquor.

(*d*) Prohibition campaigns among the labourers to be largely aided by the employers.

(*e*) Resting places, gymnasia, musical threatres, etc., to be encouraged by the employers.

S. H. JHABVALA,
Honorary Secretary.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. JHABVALA replied to the President :—" I do not think it necessary for a man to have any kind of liquor to remove the day's fatigue. I have been a teetotaler for 25 years and work regularly from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. From personal association with the workers for the last so many years I have reason to believe that intemperance is on the increase.

" To serve their own selfish ends the labourers might not probably favour total prohibition, but it is the business of the educated classes to lead them, and Government should also give their aid. If a proper understanding were cultivated among them, they would certainly vote in favour of total prohibition.

" Liquor shops should be kept open between 12 noon and 4 p.m. In the evening they should be entirely closed, because that is the time when drinking is the heaviest. If facilities for obtaining liquor are curtailed still further, there is the possibility of liquor being carried illicitly from shops. There should be no shops within the residential areas of the labourers.

" It is better to legislate with public opinion behind us rather than in advance of it.

" Those labourers who are habitual drinkers will certainly object to any kind of restrictions. Probably 75 per cent. of the workers are habitual drinkers, and they spend about Rs. 7 to 8 per month on drink. But that amount of liquor does not intoxicate them. They are habitual drinkers because there is no proper guidance and training for them. Those persons to whom we have occasionally preached temperance gradually come round to our viewpoint. I could not tell you the percentage of the reclaimed men. The confirmed opinion of the Hindu and the Moslem is against drinking, and yet there is that habit, and this habit grows with the different associations into which the unfortunate person is put from a very early age. A boy up to 20 years of age should never be allowed to go to a liquor shop, either to drink liquor himself or to fetch it for anybody else. In case his parent insists upon it, such a parent should be heavily punished. Even if the boy goes of his own accord, the parent should be punished for allowing bad influences to exercise the mind of the boy.

" The cost of living is so high that it is difficult to make both ends meet, and if more money is being spent on liquor, it is not at all due to increased wages. Vice has got a relation with the moral nature of man, and it goes on increasing.

" Foreign liquor shops should be closed along with country liquor shops. Supposing consumption has risen by 50 per cent., prices require to be raised 50 per cent., so that next year the consumption might be less. There should, at the same time, be heavy import duty on foreign liquor. If consumption is higher, the prices should be proportionately higher, and there should be no limit to this. But I expect that when prices have reached a certain point, they will become prohibitive, and that will have good effect.

" My written replies to the questions were put before the managing committee of the board, and they approved of them. If a referendum of the people whom I represent were to be taken, they would readily vote for the view I have put forward."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—" My contention is that a large part of the increased wages of labourers does not go to the liquor shop. The oriental virtue of caring for their homes is deeply ingrained in them. Of course, there are exceptions.

" When you increase the tax on foreign liquor, that will be a way of meeting the deficit in the Government revenue.

" There should be temperance work side by side with the increase in price, and Government ought to sudsidise such endeavours. We have not undertaken temperance work, as there are other larger problems requiring our attention."

To Mr. Jadav :—" My statement that the revenue has not suffered in some of the States of America by the introduction of prohibition has been made from a study of books, and not from any practical experience. I cannot say anything beyond that.

" Taxes may be imposed on those who own motor cars, and those who purchase jewellery and speculate in the gambling market or the race-course. It is creditable that Government has done something for the labourers, but the employers have done nothing for them and therefore they should be taxed."

To Dr. Patil :—" I cannot say whether the labourers drink daily, because I have not been their close watchman, but the habitual drinker spends Rs. 8 per month on drink. It wrecks their health."

To Mr. Knight :—" Industries should be encouraged, and forests should be largely exploited to make up the deficit. I think a large amount of money could be raised in the various ways I have suggested."

## No. 134.

### Replies from Mr. W. T. HALAI of Bombay.

1.—As a layman I have hereunder stated what has been my experience and opinion on the liquor traffic. I have very carefully read and re-read the set of questions submitted. The terms of reference of this Committee are not before me, but if the Committee has been appointed with the object of suggesting the ways and means of either the reduction or prohibition of liquor, then I would say that the questions as framed do not carry out the object in view. But if the Committee is appointed with the object of suggesting the ways and means of the preservation or augmentation of the income to be derived by Government from the excise duty on liquors or intoxicants or alcoholic drinks, I have nothing to complain of with regard to the questionnaire as the same has very vividly put that side of the case.

2.—I have not read the full text of the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Ex. of 7th September 1905, and the same is not available to me, but I take it that the extract given in the question truly represents the excise policy of Government; and if I am called upon to pronounce my humble opinion I would say that the same is most objectionable and is simply ruinous to this country. The actual results of the policy have led to national degeneration and instead of putting any check whatsoever on intemperance has on the contrary encouraged it, and in actual practice the policy has resulted in increasing the drink evil. If the Government of India only assume that drink is an evil, there should then be no justification for non-interference with the so-called habits of those who are stated to be using alcohol in moderation. Government do not appear to have drawn a line of demarcation as to what should be called moderation, and what the degrees of moderation are. He who takes to the habit does not commence with either bottles or barrels. His first experience commences with either a single or a few drops, but with the advent of time the drops of moderation turn into pegs and bottles of moderation. If Government thought that for the purposes of the welfare of the Chinese the prohibition of opium was necessary even though it was necessary for the vast population of China, and if Government could forego the large income derived therefrom, there seems to be no justification for advocacy of moderation on alcohol by Government. The policy rather than minimising temptation to those who do not drink has by allowing the shops to be opened here, there and everywhere without the least regard to the needs and sentiments of those who do not drink, chaffed their feelings and sentiments to the winds; and the glaring instances thereof may be given in allowing liquor shops being opened in the localities where there is hardly 1 per cent. of the population to use liquors, and in very many cases shops have been allowed to be opened near religious temples, places of worship, such as mosques and agiaries. If those officials of the Government of India who have had the most cherished feelings and solicitations for the moderate consumer of alcohol had but cared only a bit for the tender feelings and sentiments of those who do not use or touch alcohol, they would have laid down as policy of Government not to allow the liquor shops being opened in or about the vicinity of the places of worship.

In my opinion opium and charas are less harmful than alcoholic drinks as are made available to the people of India. If Government of India regard interference with the habits of moderate drinkers as outside their duty and if they want to make due provision for the needs of such persons, I will put it to them as to what provision did the Bombay Government make for the users of charas when by notifications in the *Government Gazette* they decided on total prohibition of charas consumption in Bombay and Ahmedabad and sacrificed the revenue of Rs. 3,00,000 that was derived therefrom. I say that Bombay Government have done well in the total prohibition of the use of charas and they will do still better by prohibiting alcoholic drinks. If the Government had subordinated the consideration of revenue derived from excise, there would not have been so very keen competition for securing licenses and augmentation of so much income. During the seventies and eighties the gross revenue delivered therefrom in this Presidency did not exceed 35 lacs, in the year 1913-14 it was less than 2 crores and in 1920-21 it is over 4 crores. It is popularly said that the promotion of a Collector to a higher post in Government service depends upon the increase he is able to make in the excise revenue. In face of these facts and till the same are not officially contradicted, I would—and those who think with me would—hesitate to assume that predominence has not been given by the Government of India to the revenue from this source. The raising of the tax would hardly be effective in the prevention. It has in fact given rise to the importation into India of most harmful forms of liquor. The policy of the Government of India as to reducing or diminishing the number of shops does not appear to have been carried out, but nowadays even an insignificant village has its own pitha, grog or drinking house. In this connection rather than giving my own opinion I shall quote from what the Bishop of Madras has said, as is reported in No. 128 of *Abkari*, the official quarterly organ of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association, wherein it is stated at page 23 as follows :—

> "*The Bishop of Madras advocates employing a competent person to make thorough inquiry into the facts concerning the temperance problem in India. He reports that the takings in a toddy shop at Wellington, in the Nilgiri Hills, resorted to chiefly by domestic servants and*

*coolies were Rs.* 2,500 *weekly. In the Central Provinces a village of* 568 *people had a liquor shop the license of which was Rs.* 3,000 *a year which, the Bishop says, means at least Rs.* 6,000 *a year spent on drink. The same village spent annually on education, sanitation and roads about Rs.* 700."

The above remarks are eloquent by themselves and required no comment. The Rev. F. W. Hale of the Delhi Central Social Service League says, "In nearly all the Legislatures resolutions in favour of immediate restrictions, but with prohibition as the final end in view, have been passed. And, of course, the 'prohibition' indicated is the absolute denial of the right to sell. There is a difference here not always appreciated. The right of a man to drink intoxicating liquor, or the right of a man to drink intoxicating liquor or to produce it or to keep it for himself or to offer it to his friends may not be challenged. But his right to sell it, and to make a living or make a fortune out of it or for Government to exploit it as a means of revneue will be! And total prohibition, as we understand it and advocate it, is the complete suppression of the sale of intoxicating beverages. And the line of procedure, generally indicated and generally favoured as a means to this end, seems to be local option."

The following figures of the excise revenue of the Government of India and of the Bombay Government for the last 10 years will show as to how the consideration of revenue has been subordinated :—

*Government of India.*

| Year. | Revenue in pounds sterling. |
|---|---|
| 1910-11 .. .. .. .. | 7,030,314 |
| 1911-12 .. .. .. .. | 7,609,953 |
| 1912-13 .. .. .. .. | 8,277,919 |
| 1913-14 .. .. .. .. | 8,894,300 |
| 1914-15 .. .. .. .. | 8,856,881 |
| 1915-16 .. .. .. .. | 8,632,209 |
| 1916-17 .. .. .. | 9,215,599 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. .. | 10,161,706 |
| 1918-19 .. .. .. .. | 11,557,518 |
| 1919-20 .. .. .. .. | 12,752,300 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. .. | 13,674,000 |

I now come to the figures of the Bombay Government who, when compared with the counts as a whole as represented by the Government of India, have been greater sinners in this respect :—

| Year. | Rs. |
|---|---|
| 1910-11 .. .. .. .. | 1,59,11,158 |
| 1911-12 .. .. .. .. | 1,80,04,782 |
| 1912-13 .. .. .. .. | 1,88,64,964 |
| 1913-14 .. .. .. .. | 1,99,28,495 |
| 1914-15 .. .. .. .. | 1,98,18,870 |
| 1915-16 .. .. .. .. | 2,03,29,480 |
| 1916-17 .. .. .. .. | 2,35,06,743 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. .. | 2,90,43,929 |
| 1918-19 .. .. .. .. | 3,44,59,353 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. .. | 4,04,56,000 |

In practice I have gravest apprehensions as to whether either strict or any examination is carried on with a view to minimise drink or as to the location of the shops or to conform to public opinion. Those visiting the liquor shops report that the Excise Department has deliberately failed to secure to them good quality of liquors and the liquor supplied is of the most injurious type, but as the purses of the contractors and license holders are pretty long they are free to play ducks and drakes.

3.—The above remarks will show that I have condemned the aforesaid policy which requires to be ended; there is little scope for mending. The first and foremost suggestion I should make is that the banking accounts of the officials connected with the Excise Department and their expenditure and income be examined when hardly 25 per cent. would be found who may not be taking illegal gratifications. A part of the policy is unacceptable as regards the other part. The supervision is most dishonest and defective and so long as this policy is continued it is bound to go on. Government should define moderation and should have less solicitude for the drunkards, should allow picketing and temperance work to go on. The high rates would do no good, but each ward must have a vigilance committee to inspect the shops and staff which should not be left to the inspectors or petty officials and for adulteration, etc., not only should the stuff be destroyed, and the licences cancelled, but the grog shop men be prosecuted. I would suggest that periodically a statement of such prosecutions be published in order to secure pure liquor to the users thereof at a moderate cost and that they are not supplied with stuff injurious to health.

4.—I am in favour of total prohibition and which must be brought about in the next five years if not earlier. The reasons of the evils of drink are obvious. First the drunkard suffers in health, wealth and mentality. I have come across numerous instances in the circle of my acquaintances who have come to rûe. After them their families suffer and invariably live in abject poverty and misery. The morality remains very loose and numerous crimes are committed and even progeny and future generations suffer. In this connection rather than giving my own opinion I would quote as to what Dr. Demme ascertained on the subject of progeny. In the "Daily Mail Year Book for 1915," under the heading the Nation's Drink Bill, I find the following passage :—

> "*Interesting statistics have been compiled by Dr. Demme of Bern, Switzerland. In a period covering fifteen years he compared ten temperate families with ten intemperate families living under practically the same conditions. The ten temperate families had* 61 *children of whom* 50 *lived and were normal. The intemperate families had* 57 *children of whom only* 10 *lived and were normal. In the temperate families* 5 *died in infancy. In the intemperate families* 25 *died in infancy. There were* 6 *in the intemperate families who were defective while in the intemperate families* 1 *had St. Vitus's dance,* 6 *were idiotic,* 5 *were defective,* 5 *were dwarfed and* 5 *epileptic.*'
>
> This speaks for itself.

The measure is as practicable as one could be. I would suggest it being brought about in a maximum period of five years. It is a perfectly practical measure and it should be carried out by partly closing the shops and partly decreasing the strength of the liquor systematically. If called upon, I shall explain this scheme in detail and how it should be worked out.

5.—It is not difficult to meet with the so-called objections.

(*a*) Government have got sufficient staff to prevent illicit product. If palm trees are fully tapped and factories for making gur, as is done in Bengal, are built there would be less chance of illicit product. If, while manufacturing jaggery, spirit is taken out, it should be allowed to be used for industrial purposes, where it is necessary, for instance in making of transparent soaps, etc., and for that purpose it should be, if necessary, coloured and mixed with other chemicals. I know of no other sources.

(*b*) If the Excise Department is able enough to bring the offenders bringing a handful of salt from Indian States or Portuguese territories to book, I do not think the said Department over which crores are expended is so incompetent or impotent as not to be able to detect the crime. But if they are wilfully doing it, or connive at it, I have nothing to say. There are not many Indian States wherein you may have palm or kape trees and the apprehension is not great.

(*c*) Regarding custom and habits, if the custom of opium or charas was prohibited, why should not they even if the same exists ? Among the people of India there was the custom of "sati" coupled with religious merit. Was the question of serious discontent taken into consideration ? There was the custom of what they call "doodh piti" or putting a newly born female child in a tub of milk and thereby killing her as prevailed in several Rajput races. Had the legislature thought of their serious discontent ? There is the custom of making *morlies*, or offering girls to deities and then allow them to lead unchaste lives. Has not the question of serious discontent of custom come in there ? Thousands of instances of customs having been overruled can be given when the same have been interfered with for the good of society and for the sake of humanity. The bug-bear of the alleged customs ought not to come in the way.

(*d*) The Preventive Department is large enough, but if it is not doing its duty properly, rigorous steps for its improvement should be taken and illegal exactions to be severely dealt with so as to set an example to others of the same class.

(*e*) I have no apprehensions on this score. Those who have given up one do not as a rule take to other vices or drugs, but when one vice continues it brings together all its other companions.

6.—My own opinion is that prohibition will be effective more for the present generation and surely there will be a larger blessing for the generation to come.

7.—Other methods and educative works are necessary but they would be less effective without prohibitive legislation and without which the goal would not be reached.

8.—Those using toddy or shindi are taking it as food and pure toddy does not appear to do them harm. It is because of the restrictions on pure toddy that the drunkards are taking to strong alcohols which shatter their constitution. And in the method that I am going to suggest for five years' programme for total prohibition supply of pure toddy would be a substitution.

9.—As I consider that absolute prohibition is quite feasible and desirable I do not propose to suggest other means to control consumption or reduction.

10.—The means suggested would have to be employed for achieving the object in view.

11.—Yes.

12.—Yes.

13.—They are mere dummies without being able to do any useful work. The members complain that they are able to do nothing for want of authority. Their suggestions are not given effect to, and therefore they are unable to render useful or any service at all. They ought to have some administrative authority or in any event their suggestions should be given effect to.

14.—Yes, crimes increase. In the mills and other factories it has been found that after drink or as after-effects thereof they are not able to turn out proper work especially after holidays when they drink to their hearts' content.

15.—This is a question to be considered by the executive and legislature but I have to pronounce my opinion. I think there is a large scope for increase of the revenue from Forest, Irrigation and Land Revenue Departments and other Departments, and a sharp pruning knife to be applied to the expenditure side. In Bombay, where His Excellency the Governor has kept certain Departments or portfolioes to himself, we do not require four Executive Members, and three Ministers. So soon you appoint a new official, the charges of his department increase. The next item I shall turn attention to would be the most costly Development Department. The Department of the Director of Information does not appear to have done much good nor can the Department of Director of Industries admit of the expenditure that is incurred after it. There is clearly a large scope for curtailment of expenditure in Police and Courts of Justice, and I would not object even if the expenditure on education is to be curtailed. There is a scope for retrenchment in medical expenditure.

16.—No.

17.—This custom is dying out, but I do not think a larger child death could be attributed to this custom even where the parties are administering doses thereof, especially in labouring classes when women go to work.

Having a very limited time at my disposal I have not given a detailed reply to question No. 15, but if so required I shall be happy to prepare a statement and submit the same to this Committee for their careful consideration.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. HALAI replied to the President :—"A liquor shop has been opened in Bazar Gate Street, when 20 yards away there are other liquor shops. It has been there for three or four years and there have been protests against its location there, as within a stone's throw there is a mosque and a Jain temple on the other side.

"I say that *charas* is less harmful than alcohol from my association with people who hold that opinion ; I cannot give any other authority for the statement.

"If the Committee looks up Government records, they will find that the Collector's promotion depends on the increase he is able to make in the Excise revenue. I will ask my friends who gave me that information confidentially to communicate with the Committee.

"I cannot say what quantity of liquor may be considered to be moderate ; it depends on the constitution of the man who drinks. One aspect of moderation is not to exceed one's ability to bear the expenditure. Government with so many resources at their disposal will be able to define it better.

"I am not aware of the exact amount spent on the Excise Department.

"Beyond the instances given in my written statement I do not know of any where Government have interfered with the customs of the people.

"Some retrenchment could be effected by having only two Executive Councillors and two Ministers. The reclamation schemes will end in disaster, and should be given up.

"Liquor shops should not be indiscriminately opened. If one-third of the people of a locality object to a shop, it must be removed. If there is only one shop in a village, it should be closed at once. In the case of a referendum, both men and women should have the right to vote. If less than 30 per cent. are in favour of abolishing a shop, then it may be retained."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"I consider opium less harmful than alcohol. I would not mind if light wines were given as substitutes in addition to toddy during the five years that prohibition would come into force."

To Dr. Patil :—"People who drink say that the liquor given to them is adulterated, of low quality, and rubbish."

To Mr. Knight :—"I shall prepare a scheme to cover the deficit and submit it to the Committee."

To the President :—"Bars which have been opened at railway stations and near places of public entertainment require to be closed."

To Rao Saheb Desai :—"The strength of foreign liquors should also be reduced."

## No. 135

### Replies of Mr. J. P. BRANDER, I. C. S., Collector of Bombay.

1. Assistant Collector in Ahmednagar, Poona, East Khandesh; Collector in West Khandesh in Central Division, Collector in Ratnagiri in Southern Division, and in Surat, Panch Mahals and Kaira in Northern Division; Collector in Bombay City.

2. (*a*) Sound.

(*b*) Successful so far as consistently carried out.

The policy has greatly helped to check intemperance. The general alcoholic excess in Surat, etc., prevalent in pre-British times before the policy was adopted and developed, as described on page 88 of the Indian Excise Committee's report, 1906, does not occur now.

3. No change at all should be made in the policy. The policy has been thoroughly examined several times. Only details need improvement.

4. No. I consider prohibition, whether total or partial as by rationing, unsound and impracticable. The general weight of testimony, both documentary and by gentlemen I have met who have lately been in America, is that attempted prohibition there has proved a colossal failure, any one who can afford it can secure liquor, countless stills have been set up in houses, people have learnt to drink who would not have done so otherwise, the police have become corrupt and many of them are in league with the illicit traders, many have taken to deleterious wood alcohol and drugs, there is a growing disrespect for law and an unhealthy desire to evade and break it, crime has increased, hundreds of millions are lost to the state in taxes and vast sums are spent on the prohibition staff, *vide* paragraph 14 of my attached report No. 697, dated 9th January 1922, to the Commissioner of Customs, Salt and Excise, Bombay. The attached letter from the *Times of India* of about February 4th, 1922, is only one of many similar pieces of evidence. If then in America, a country of advanced civilisation and law-abiding instincts, and able to maintain an expensive preventive staff, prohibition has broken down, prohibition in India with countless facilities for illicit distillation and smuggling from Indian States, with but small financial capacity for maintaining a large preventive staff, and with a population the masses of which are not law-abiding, at least in a matter where they feel no special call to be so, is certain to fail.

5. Prohibition would be regarded by the masses as having no moral basis, but being simply an attempt by the educated classes who do not drink to interfere with the customs and pleasures of the masses. Penal enactments and executive measures which are thus regarded as having no moral sanction and which cause the masses inconvenience and annoyance and can be evaded easily cannot succeed, and if enforced are bound to cause contempt and hatred of law generally.

6. Prohibition failing in one generation is likely to fail still more with the next. Parents will naturally teach their children to evade the law.

9. To control consumption, nothing more is required than to continue the existing policy, the main point of which is to raise the still-head duty and license fees as high as possible consistent with not stimulating illicit distillation and practices. In paragraph 7 of my report No. 697, I pointed out that this policy has been a success in Bombay City as regards country liquor, for consumption per head between 1901-02 and 1920-21 has actually fallen in spite of the great increase in wages. Attacks on intemperance should be indirect, not frontal ones. Promotion of education, Savings Banks, healthy amusements, recreations and social activities, indoor and outdoor welfare work, improvements in housing and desire for improvement of conditions are the factors and motives which the middle and upper classes should seek to stimulate among the masses, thus taking and showing a real interest in the masses. Prohibition is in effect a policy of negation and deprivation of pleasures, adopted by the higher classes to the masses, which naturally the masses will regard with resentment and which is therefore bound to fail.

10 (*a*) *Rationing of shops.*—My views are stated in full in paragraph 11 of report No. 697. Rationing is partial prohibition. The Bombay Advisory Committee are against it. I regard it as impracticable and that it will cause grave evils and be very troublesome to the public, licensees and Excise staff. It will drive people to foreign liquor, probably more harmful than country liquor and so make a present of large amounts of provincial revenue to the Government of India. In proportion as it causes shortage it will drive the masses to illicit practices. It will increase the profits of licensees at the expense of Government. Rationing by arbitrarily reducing the quantity available for consumption is illogical and unnecessary because the present system of raising the still-head duty as high as possible is in effect a kind of rationing which works automatically and gives no trouble to any one, *vide* paragraph 12 of report No. 697.

10 (*b*) *Increasing price of liquor.*—This is a sound method of restricting or reducing consumption. The price can only be raised to the point where any further increase would induce illicit methods.

10 (*c*) *Reducing shops.*—The majority of the Bombay Advisory Committee and I are against it and also the Excise staff as regards Bombay City. The Madras Excise Report holds that reduction of shops does not decrease consumption but causes illicit practices and disorder. In Bombay City shops have been much reduced in the last 20 years, probably too much so when one considers the vast increase of population, *vide* also paragraphs 1 to 10 of report No. 697.

10 (*d*) *Reducing days and hours of sale.*—This has already been done in Bombay. Further reduction is I think unnecessary.

10 (*e*) *Reducing strength.*—I do not favour reducing liquor below 30° U. P. To do so will only drive people to foreign liquor which is generally 25° U. P., and so will greatly increase the revenue of the Government of India at the expense of that of the Government of Bombay. The Madras Excise Report, copy attached, states that reduction does not reduce the total consumption of spirit, while it increases the drinking habit. This policy has been given up in Madras which is the leading province in India in excise administration.

10 (*f*) *Regulating location of shops.*—This is considered regularly by the Bombay Advisory Committee. Little can be done on these lines in Bombay City. As stated in paragraph 6 of report No. 697, to order a shop to be removed is as good as ordering it to be closed, for alternative sites cannot be had. No reduction in total consumption in Bombay City would be effected by removing shops.

10 (*g*) *Restricting or prohibition of import and sale of foreign liquor.*—This would cause great hardship to and resentment among Europeans and Anglo-Indians who consider such liquor necessary to health and comfort. Such liquor is also required for religious ceremonies. Raising the Customs duty is the only practicable policy and such rise has probably gone far enough.

10 (*i*) Age limit for customers is prescribed now.

10 (*j*) To subsidise temperance associations would be a pure waste of money. Voluntary effort is the only effort worth anything.

10 (*k*) *Restricting or prohibiting removal of liquor from shops.*—This is unsound. It would only encourage illicit practices.

11. I am entirely opposed to local option. The regulation of shops should be wholly in the hands of the Excise officers, but there should be Advisory Committees and they should be consulted. Their suggestions are not always useful, but the existence of such committees gives Government officers the opportunity of explaining to popular representatives the reasons for accepting or rejecting their suggestions and a link or liaison between the executive administration and the local public bodies is provided.

12. I am opposed at present to entrusting local bodies with these powers. To do so would result in much corruption and blackmail. In many cases the licensees would have to bribe the members of the committees. This would have the effect of reducing the Excise revenue.

13. The Advisory Committees are not of much use as regards suggestions. The suggestions of some of their members are often found on inquiry to be unsound. But the system is useful for the reason given in paragraph 11 above.

16. Prohibition should not be introduced for opium and hemp drugs, any more than for liquor. The duty should be kept high, as for liquor. No other method of restriction is required.

Finally I would add that my general views are stated at length in my report No. 697, dated 9th January 1922, to which reference should be made. Before considering any detailed measures the Excise Committee should first, I think, decide on two principal questions which govern the whole situation—the first, whether it is a crime or social evil to drink in moderation ; the second, whether the vast majority of moderate drinkers are to be penalised or interfered with on account of the excesses of a small minority. There is much medical opinion that a moderate use of alcohol in the tropics is beneficial, especially to those exposed to bad or depressing climates and hard physical work like that of the Bombay millhands. The psychological effect of alcohol in making men forget their cares and troubles is undoubted. The working men of Bombay have to a large extent the habit of drinking moderately, and to interfere with this is likely to cause dangerous discontent. My opinion is that even partial prohibition is unsound, that customers should be given as now reasonable facilities for obtaining drink at a high but not excessive price, that restrictions should be on the lines now in force, such as those of limit of age of customers, not opening in the mornings, not supplying drink to persons the worse of liquor and so on. I consider that any abandonment of this policy or attempt to bring about prohibition even partial would be futile. It would actually increase consumption, but the consumption would be largely illicit. Government would throw away vast amounts of revenue and so reduce the education and other public facilities which that revenue now provides. The population of India would not like to be taxed to make up the deficit. Also the masses would as in America be demoralised and respect for law and order be undermined owing to the impossibility of making prohibition effective. For prohibition is both contrary to human nature and Government would be faced with the impossibility of maintaining a huge preventive staff, while at the same time the revenue which now maintains this staff would have largely disappeared.

C. R. No. 697.

Excise Department,

Bombay, 9th January 1922.

To

The Commissioner of Customs, Salt and Excise, Bombay.

*Subject*:—Reduction in the number of liquor shops in the Town and Island of Bombay and their removal from prominent localities.

Sir,

With reference to your No. 58-96 of 23rd July 1921, under Government Order No. L. C. C.—3 of 19th July 1921, I have the honour to report as follows.

2. The Advisory Committee was consulted by circular and two meetings were held by me, the Government order being explained. The majority are against any reduction of shops holding that such action does not effect any reduction of consumption but merely favours some licensees at the expense of others and tends to throw the business into the hands of large capitalists. The experience of our Excise staff is the same. The Madras Excise Report (attached), paragraph 17, is to the same effect. It states that decrease of shops has merely led to the increase of illicit practices and disorderliness at the remaining shops. On the other hand there was a strong opinion in the Advisory Committee that toddy shops and booths should be increased, on the idea that toddy is comparatively harmless drink.

3. Only four members proposed closing or removal of particular shops as follows :—

(1) Mr. Mantry of "D" Ward proposed closing of country liquor shops 166 at Gamdevi and 242 at Damar Lane saying country liquor shop No. 21 at Chowpatty could supply all local needs and shop 242 is a nuisance to the locality. I visited the shops. Both have been there for years, without complaints, are in quite isolated sites, at a reasonable distance from each other, and are necessary for the localities. Closing down of either would merely transfer the custom elsewhere. I am quite against closing either and consider Mr. Mantry adduces no valid reason to close either.

(2) Mr. Kurty of Ward "C" proposed closing of country liquor shops 256 at Bapu Khote Street and 103 at Erskine Road, Null Bazar, as they are near mosques. I visited both. Both have been there many years without complaints on the ground of proximity to the mosques or on any other grounds. I questioned the custodians of both mosques, who said they have absolutely no objection to the shops and that they are well conducted. Shop 103 is as far as 25 yards form the mosques on the same side of the road. Mr. Kurty's objections are quite groundless and form a striking example of the futility of objections so often raised to shops. There is no reason to close either shop. Shop 226 is privileged shop and cannot be closed. It is a very large one and fetched Rs. 33,704 in auction.

(3) Rao Bahadur Manaji of "E" Ward proposed that one out of country liquor shops 74 and 144 Kamathipura Bazar Road should be closed as they are close to each other and that shop 71 on the same road be closed being near a library and school. All these however are privileged so cannot be closed in the lifetime of the licensees. Also the licensees of 74 and 71 under Government memorandum No. C.—859, R. D. of 18th March 1921 have been already ordered to remove when they can find other sites. So nothing further can or need be done as regards them.

The objection on the ground of the school is groundless. Schools close at 5 p.m. and up to that hour and even later drinking is by small numbers of people in a perfectly orderly manner. Kamathipura is a heavy drinking locality, and in my opinion and from what I saw of the locality, shops 74, 71 and 144 would be best left where they are.

Rao Bahadur Manaji also proposed that out of three country liquor shops on Upper Duncan Road, one should be closed. There are four shops on this road. Two Nos. 146 and 43 are privileged and cannot be closed. The locality is thickly populated and I see no reason to reduce any of the four shops. To do so will not reduce the consumption at all.

Rao Bahadur Manaji also proposed that one of shops 11 and 12 on Jail Road East be closed, as being close to each other. There are 5 or 6 shops on this road but the locality is densely populated with a drinking population. From my inspection I consider that none of these shops should be closed, as doing so would not decrease consumption in any way.

(4) Dr. Javle of "G" Ward proposed that one of the country liquor shops 224 and 195 at Dharavi village be closed. These shops are quite near each other, and the nearest shop is two-thirds of a mile away. The closure of either would tend to create an undesirable monopoly in the future so neither should I think be closed.

Dr. Javle proposed that either country liquor shop 29 or 167 at Mahim Agar be closed. No. 167 is privileged so cannot be closed. Here again there is danger of monopoly in future and to close either would be unsound.

He proposed that one of the two shops 175 and 176 in Worli Koliwada be closed. Other shops are far off, and a monopoly would be created, with the dangers of overcrowding and excessive prices. The proposal is therefore unsound.

4. These proposals by the four members to close particular shops were not supported by the Committee as a whole. As stated above, the majority of the Committee are quite against any reduction in the number of shops. These four members are not representatives of the moderate opinion of the Committee as a whole. They in no case made out any good reason to abolish any particular shop and in several cases their objections, as shown above, to particular shops were quite unreasonable.

5. No member objected to any particular foreign liquor shop and the opinion of the Committee that there should be no reduction of shops covers the case of foreign liquor shops also. The Committee had before them the figures of numbers of all classes of liquor shops in the last 21 years and of the total sitting and standing accommodation in them all.

6. On the question of removal of shops from prominent positions, it was generally felt by the Committee that at least so long as the Rent Act exists nothing can be done. To order the removal of a shop at present is in effect to close it as landlords cannot turn out tenants of other shops which licensees might want to rent. Another difficulty is that strenuous objections are always raised to every change of site. So allowing shops to remain where they are is probably less likely to cause objections from the public. On the point whether to locate shops in prominent or secluded positions is preferable, diversity of opinion by the Committee was expressed. If they are in secluded places, it is difficult for the police to supervise them, and also to protect them and customers against attacks of hooligans or rioters. The Excise Committee's Report of 1905-06, page 99, refers to the differences of opinion among even temperance reformers as to whether shops should be in prominent or secluded positions.

7. The question arises whether the number of liquor shops in Bombay is excessive. The following shows the numbers of the last 21 years.

| Years. | C. L. | Hotel. | Ref. Room. | "On". | "Off". | Wholesale. | Toddy shops. | Booths. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1901-02 .. | 296 | 14 | 41 | 49 | 75 | .. | 100 | 62 |
| 1910-11 .. | 265 | 12 | 40 | 47 | 69 | 8 | 91 | 110 |
| 1921-22 .. | 238 | 11 | 45 | 36 | 54 | 62 | 127 | 86 |

The increase in wholesale foreign licenses is nominal as in 1901-02 no separate licenses were required for wholesale business, the foreign "off" licensees being authorized to do wholesale business under their license. Also increase in wholesale licenses does not affect consumption, the minimum quantity sold being 12 bottles. The increase in toddy booths is insignificant as each booth has but a limited number of trees. Toddy shops increased from 100 to 127. The refreshment rooms from 41 to 45. The remarkable feature is that in spite of an enormous increase in population, *viz.*, from 7,76,006 in 1901-02 to 9,79,445 in 1910-11 and 11,75,914 in 1920-21, all other kinds of country and foreign liquor supplying institutions other than those just mentioned have greatly decreased, *e.g.*, country liquor shops from 296 to 238 while the foreign "on" and "off" shops are now only 36 and 54 respectively. Government have thus a complete defence to the charge of encouraging creation of shops. The population per country liquor shop is now 4,941 compared with 2,621 in 1901-02, that per foreign liquor institution (*viz.*, Hotels, Refreshment Rooms and "On" shops) is 12,249 compared with 7,461 in 1901-02, that per toddy shop and booth is 5,520 compared with 4,790 in 1901-02. Drinking facilities are thus much less per head of population than in 1901-02. Consumption was ·84 proof gallon per head in 1901-02 and ·71 in 1920-21, an actual fall in spite of the great increase in wages. No reliable figures are obtainable of consumption of foreign liquor. The sitting and standing accommodation in shops is as follows :—

| Kind of shop. | Number. | Sitting. | Standing. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Country liquor .. .. .. | 238 | 10,271 | 3,489 | 13,760 |
| Toddy .. .. .. | 127 | 5,563 | 1,203 | 6,766 |
| Foreign "On" .. .. .. | 36 | 1,157 | 329 | 1,486 |
| Total .. | 395 | 16,991 | 5,021 | 22,012 |

Most shops are small cramped places and apt to get overcrowded. This accommodation for a population of 11,75,914 seems inadequate.

8. The facts thus are that the numbers of shops of all kinds, compared with the vast population, are moderate and perhaps too few. The accommodation in the shops is inadequate. The natural thing would have been an increase in the number of shops as the population increased instead of which a large decrease has been made. Reduction however has I think gone as far as is required. It is also useless as a method of appreciably reducing consumption. Further reduction therefore is not necessary or desirable. In fact it is probably the case that, as in Madras City, an increase of shops is required to reduce the overcrowding, and consequent noise and disorder at particular shops. The Madras Board of Revenue, paragraph 17, state that such increase in Madras would cause consumption to fall. However public opinion of the educated classes would not understand such a step, so it is not recommended at present.

9. Government should also bear in mind that reduction of shops would certainly result in large sacrifices of Government revenue without reducing consumption. The reason is as follows :—Owing to the Rent Act and local objections to establishing a shop where none existed before there is really no competition at the annual auctions for most of the shops. Would-be competitors know they cannot get another site. The large increase in fees at the recent auction was not due to competition but to my putting up the price at which I agreed to knock down the shop. So cancelling licenses will not increase the competition for the remaining shops. Thus the contrary opinion expressed in the third last sentence of the Excise Minister's Note dated the 22nd July 1921 forwarded to me under your No. 58-96 of 27th July 1921 does not operate in Bombay City. Licenses would gradually concentrate in the hands of a limited number of men and the public suffer from excessive increase of price.

10. It is true that in 1920-21 consumption in Bombay has increased to 8,36,173 proof gallons compared with 6,80,249 proof gallons in the previous year. This is undoubtedly due to the increased wages of the mill-hands and of workers in other industries. The increase does not seem to me any cause for alarm. Similar fluctuations have occurred in former years. The proper way to check further increase or reduce the consumption is to raise the still-head duty. This I think can be done to some extent, as reported in paragraph 5 of my No. C-12, dated the 16th September 1921.

11. The question of rationing country and foreign liquor shops was discussed by the Committee but ultimately only one member remained in favour of it. The Excise staff and I regard rationing as entirely impracticable. It is easy to guess what would happen under such a system. Even if the same quantity of liquor as was supplied in 1920-21 is supplied and no initial reduction or progressive annual reduction in quantity is made, there will, as population, wage earning capacity, and wish to obtain liquor increase, be a shortage either generally or at particular shops. The shop-keeper will, of course, raise the price, those with most money will secure the liquor, and the poor will have to spend a large amount than ever on what is to many the indispensible liquor. The shortage and high prices will drive people to foreign liquor. If the attempt to ration foreign liquor also is made it will cause great resentment among Europeans, Anglo-Indians, and East Indians, the majority of which classes are not excessive drinkers. A special staff to check sales and restrict supply from the wholesale to the retail dealers would be necessary. Rationing in fact will be partial prohibition, and all the obvious and known evils of prohibition will result. *People addicted to alcohol will have at all costs either it or something which will produce effects similar to it.* There will be increased use of intoxicating drugs such as ganja and opium and especially cocaine. The traffic in the latter is great and quite beyond our powers to cope with. People will take to methylated spirits, which are most harmful. They will distil illicit liquor at home. I am told that in America this is being done on a vast scale and that to keep two raisins in a bottle of weak bear for 24 hours makes a most intoxicating drink. Liquor will be made in the jungles of Thana, Salsette, Kolaba and Janjira and smuggled to Bombay by boat. When the people learn the methods of making drink at home, drinking will increase and spread to women and children, classes now immune. A great increase in drinking clubs may be confidently predicted, such as is said to have occurred in England owing to the War restrictions on liquor sales. A large preventive staff will be necessary and even then will be ineffective, having to contend with so strong and wide-spread a human feeling and demand. There will be heavy losses of Excise revenue, nor will the people readily agree in these non-co-operative days to alternative methods of taxation. I am convinced that the present arrangements whereby any person can get and consume in the view of the public at the public liquor shops illicit liquor of good quality at a high but not excessive price, to what extent he wishes and can pay for, short of misconducting himself form the best means of satisfying that demand for drink which is due to the desire of the working classes tired and depressed with the exhausting work and climate and slum life of Bombay to obtain a physical stimulus and a pardonable feeling of mental comfort and well being.

12. Rationing by raising the price to the consumers, will have the same effect as raising the still-head duty would have. Either method will reduce licit consumption, but it is far better to do so by the latter method as it will not sacrifice Government revenue but may indeed increase it. By the rationing method, the profit from the enhanced price of whatever liquor is available will largely go to the licensees for as said above, there is no real competition in auction for most of the shops.

13. There is ample experience both in India and abroad to show that when the supply of and facilities for obtaining licit liquor at not excessive prices are curtailed either by the State closing shops, restricting the hours too much, or by outside actions such as picketing, a supply of illicit liquor and all sorts of irregular practices immediately develop. Madras Excise experience is similar. In paragraph 17 of the attached Madras report illicit practices, increased home drinking, increased drinking by habitual drinkers, increased rowdiness have been caused by reduction of shops, and the Board of Revenue state that an increase of shops in Madras City would decrease both rowdiness and consumption.

14. Above all the prohibition policy of America provides an example and warning. The opinion of disinterested publicists and ordinary persons, both American and visitors to America is that it is proving a colossal and disastrous failure. It entails the loss of the present revenue from liquor and the maintenance of a huge and expensive preventive staff which carries out excessive interference with personal liberties. In the large cities the police on the testimony of their own officers are demoralised and actively conniving at the illicit traffic. The rich can get as much drink as they like but the poor have to pay a prohibitive price and have taken to most harmful substitutes. Illicit distillation in big towns and smuggling of liquor from Canada and the vast sea-board is carried on on an enormous scale. Home brewing is carried on extensively and persons who under the old system would never have learnt to drink are taking to it. The corruption of the police and the case by which the public can defeat the law have had a most demoralising effect. The subject of how to evade the law has taken an unhealthy hold of the public mind. Congress has been forced to modify the laws and allow making of liquor at home. This means of course an end of prohibition. Prior to prohibition, the manufacture, sale and consumption of liquor were under public control and the public eye, but these have merely been driven under ground and to the homes, not suppressed.

15. It may be objected that there is no intension of having prohibition in India. But rationing and also reduction of shops and of drinking facilities below the public demand and need for the same will, as shown above, have exactly the same results as partial prohibition. Also many advocates of these measures undoubtedly intend them as steps towards a policy of complete prohibition.

16. To sum up, I am convinced that rationing and general or progressive reduction of shops in Bombay city or reducing reasonable facilities for obtaining licit liquor or raising the still-head duty too high would prove a wrong and disastrous policy, demoralising the public and probably encouraging persons and classes to drink who do not do so now, and inducing drinkers both to drink more liquor, much of which would be illicit and highly deleterious, and to consume drug. *The demand for drink will be satisfied at all costs.* It is only education, persuasion, and indirect measures that can reduce the demands. Compulsion, direct or indirect, will prove useless. The danger of discontent on the part of the working classes and of their resentment at being deprived of drinking facilities which the rich, who can get up clubs or buy wholesale, will continue to enjoy are serious and the masses under such conditions will form inflamable material for agitators. I have gone into the whole question in detail so that Government may realise what will occur if a policy of even partial prohibition or of undue restriction is adopted.

17. In fact before embarking on specific novel measures to reduce consumption, Government should I consider first think out and decide two questions of general policy. The first is whether it is a social crime or evil to drink in moderation. The second is whether the vast majority of moderate drinkers are to be penalised or interfered with on account of the admitted excuses of a small minority. The drinkers to excess in Bombay City are estimated at less than 10 per cent. of the whole number of drinkers. Whatever restrictions are imposed will have no effect on the latter class. By hook or crook they will get drink of some kind by some means or methylated spirits or drugs as a substitute. The really important question is the effect of restrictions on the moderate drinkers. There is much medical opinion in favour of the moderate use of alcohol. Doctors on the Advisory Committee disagreed on the point. A considerable number of eminent doctors in England have pronounced the moderate use of alcohol beneficial. Sir William Moore formerly Surgeon General to the Bombay Government says in his "Family medicine for India" that Europeans in India require some alcohol daily to keep fit in the debilitating conditions of the tropics. The Excise Committee's Report, paragraph 32, states that the damp and unhealthy Gujarat and Konkan climate is one cause of the higher consumption of liquor there. There is no doubt that men who have exhausting physical labour in a depressing climate of conditions do require or consider they require (which is much the same thing) a stimulant (*vide* paragraph 62 of the report), the stimulant being for their physical system or their mental well-being or both. The reduction in the supply of beer in England in the war caused excessive discontent among workers. The educated sedentary classes in the United Kingdom, America and India do not drink to anything like the same extent as the working classes feeling no need for liquor, and so they do not understand the case of the working classes. Comparatively few European men in India are teetotallers as compared with the respective proportions of teetotallers and non-teetotallers in the United Kingdom, the general opinion and experience among Europeans in India are that they require a stimulant, yet excess among them

is not common. If these classes of Indians and Europeans are restricted or penalised by reducing present facilities for obtaining liquor, by limiting the quantity obtainable, or making the price excessive there will be serious discontent. I am convinced that no case either on medical, social or law and order grounds has been established justifying restrictions or penalisations of the drinking population directed towards the goal of even partial prohibition. If this proposition is accepted then Government efforts should logically be confined to regulating the drink trade and habit, not to restricting them. Measures such as not opening the shops till after the time when mill-hands and other labourers have gone to work are thoroughly sound. Similarly supply of drink to persons the worse of liquor should be discouraged as is done now. The feeling of the Advisory Committee was that Government should not reduce shops but maintain and put in force regulatory measures of the above nature.

18. Adoption by Government of direct measures to reduce consumption would be in my opinion to fly straight in the face of facts and experience and end in a fiasco. Public opinion too among some classes which not long ago was inclined for prohibition or severe restriction is altering, now that the facts and difficulties are becoming better known, the impossibility of prohibition in India, where so many facilities for illicit distillation exists, is being realised, and the failure of prohibition in America is being revealed. It is fortunate for other countries that America has shown them a prohibitive experiment at her own expense. It will not be long until this experiment works itself to a conclusion. Informal opinion is that general prohibition in America will be given up. Government should it is recommended await the result of this experiment and meantime continue the existing Excise arrangements in Bombay City.

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) J. P. BRANDER,
Collector of Bombay.

*Extract from the "Times of India" dated about, 4th February 1922.*

PROHIBITION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The following extract from the *Leith Observer* forms part of a letter from a Scottish gentleman, an abstainer, who has been resident in the United States, particularly New York, for the past fifty years. He is stated to be in no way interested in the liquor trade or even to have been interested in it and the purpose of his letter is to protest against mis-statements made regarding the effects of prohibition in the United States of America. He first disagrees with the statement that an enormous majority of Americans are in favour of prohibition, showing that the question has never been referred to them and turning next to the claim that one result of prohibition has been "400,000,000 dollars saved" he says :—"It is 'to laugh'. What about the hundreds of millions lost to the Government in taxes? What about the untold millions being expended in the attempt to enforce this 'popular' law? If so 'popular'—why the difficulty in its enforcement?"

Then as to the effects of prohibition on society : "Society can be protected without infringing on the innate and inalienable rights of the individual. When acts and customs by the individual become improper, then and not till then comes in the right to restrict his or her personal freedom. All advocates of laws that aim to deprive the individual of his inherent rights, on the plea of no matter what are imbued with the same impulse that urged the Inquisitors of the Spanish Inquisition to burn the bodies of living men to save their souls."

Turning then to the claim of 'Jails emptied, crimes less, property enhanced in value' by prohibition, the correspondent says :—"All this in face of the fact that we are witnessing an epoch of crime never before witnessed in the history of the country. Murders, burglaries, 'hold ups' were never so rampant. If I were to relate some of the 'hold ups' and crimes committed in daylight in streets crowded with people, one would hardly think such conditions could exist. To give reasons for my saying crime has increased since prohibition, note the following :—For protection of my home from theft before prohibition. It cost me 12 dollars per annum per 1000 dollars. Since prohibition, I am compelled to pay 22 dollars for the same policy. The claim that the rareness of a drunken man or woman on the streets of any American cities is due to prohibition, is absolutely devoid of truth. This condition has existed in the United States for the last fifty years and over, to which I can personally testify."

As to the enforcement of prohibition in the United States of America the less said the better : "last summer, the writer with some friends, visited every State in the Union and we have yet to discover a place where my friends could not buy all the strong drink they desire. I say 'my friends', because I am an abstainer. One condition prohibition has accomplished here, in suppressing breweries, is that it has opened millions of small breweries in millions of families in America and private stills in millions of homes. The statement attributing the great increase in savings bank deposits to prohibition is, says the writer, bunkum, for this was due solely to the immense wages the mechanics and the labourers received during the great war, and already evidence of a great decrease in deposits is shown."

[*With the Compliments of the Director of Information, Bombay.*]

P.-89.

22nd November 1921.

# ABKARI ADMINISTRATION, 1920-21.

(*From the Publicity Bureau.*)

MADRAS.

The following extracts from the Board's report on Abkari Administration, 1920-21, are published for general information. The figures are based on records in the office of the Commissioner of Salt and Abkari.

## *General.*

The present moment, when the Abkari policy followed in recent years is being subjected to such vehement criticism, seems a suitable opportunity to review the main facts of the case in somewhat greater detail than is customary in an annual report : It has been asserted in public by responsible politicians that Government's policy has actually led to an increase in drinking and that the vice of drunkenness was imported into India with western civilization. The slightest acquaintance with conditions in the past refutes the latter allegation. The writings of early travellers in India, for instance Tavernier and the Jesuit John D. Britto, contain frequent references to the drunken habits of the lower castes in their days. Tippu Sultan actually endeavoured to check them by issuing an order that all the palm trees within his dominions should be cut down, but the orders were obeyed only in the neighbourhood of his capital. Coming to more recent times the state of affairs which prevailed in Malabar, Tinnevelly and other toddy producing areas in the years before the introduction of the tree tax system, is within living memory, and Mr. Bradley as Commissioner of Salt and Abkari in 1905 wrote that he had been told by reliable officers who knew Tinnevelly and South Madura over 20 years previously that no man, woman or child of the lower castes could be found sober in the toddy season after the middle of the day and that similar accounts had been given to him in the case of the Godavari district. Even at the present time, in those areas to which the Government system of taxation and control cannot, for special reasons, be extended, and in which the natural sources of intoxicating liquor are abundant, such as parts of the Agency tracts and the mountainous regions of the Kurnook district, the forest and hill population indulge still in alcoholic orgies which have been customary for generations.

The other charge, that the policy of the Government has led to an increase in drinking will be briefly examined in the succeeding paragraphs.

The policy of Government has always been to minimise temptation to those who do not drink, and to discourage excess among those who do ; and to the furtherance of this policy all considerations of revenue are absolutely subordinate. The Excise Committee which was appointed in 1905-06 was asked to consider the question of the better regulation of the trade in intoxicants with special reference to reduction in consumption. The policy and methods of excise administration in India were thoroughly examined in 1914, in the light of the criticism made by the Temperance Deputation which waited on the Secretary of State for India on the 18th July 1912. The Government of India after a searching examination of the Excise Administration since 1890 reaffirmed the policy quoted above and laid down the following general measures to give effect to this policy :—

(i) suppression of illicit methods of all kinds,

(ii) maintenance of the closest possible control and supervision over the liquor and drugs traffic,

(iii) levy of as high a rate of duty as possible without unduly encouraging illicit methods,

(iv) reduction in the number of retail shops for the sale of liquor and drugs,

(v) regulation and close supervision of the hours of sale, the selection of sites and the general practices adopted in manufacture and vend, and

(vi) appointment of advisory committees and accepting their recommendations in so for as they are consistent with the general principles laid down.

The several recommendations of the Excise Committee of 1905-06 made for the better regulation of the trade in intoxicants were given effect to in this Presidency mostly from 1909-10.

The chief object of attack by the critics of the present excise policy is the growth of the excise revenue. There has been no doubt in recent years a large increase in revenue as will be seen from the following figures for the last ten years :—

| Year. | Revenue in lakhs (Imperial statement I). |
|---|---|
| | Rs. |
| 1911-12 .. .. .. .. | 300·26 |
| 1912-13 .. .. .. .. | 330·29 |
| 1913-14 .. .. .. .. | 365·11 |
| 1914-15 .. .. .. .. | 366·19 |
| 1915-16 .. .. .. .. | 351·19 |
| 1916-17 .. .. .. .. | 371·98 |
| 1917-18 .. .. .. .. | 403·50 |
| 1918-19 .. .. .. .. | 464·45 |
| 1919-20 .. .. .. .. | 536·15 |
| 1920-21 .. .. .. .. | 543·57 |

How much of this increase has been brought about by increase in taxation and by increase in consumption, respectively, and how far the steps taken by Government to check the growth of consumption of the several intoxicants have produced the desired effect will be examined in the succeeding paragraphs under each main head of revenue, *viz.*, Country spirits, Foreign liquor, Toddy, Opium and Hemp drugs.

The fall in consumption of various intoxicants was heavy in 1915-16 on account of the initial effects of the war on trade and industries. When trade revived, consumption began to rise again and in 1919-20 reached its zenith on account of high wages earned and favourable season. In 1920-21 fall began again. The conclusion to be drawn is that consumption depends more on the season. But it can scarcely be doubted that consumption would have been much heavier but for the heavy taxation imposed. The effect of enhanced taxation will appear from the statistics presented below.

*Country spirit.*—Much of the criticism of temperance enthusiasts is usually levelled against the increase in consumption of country spirit. This is perhaps natural partly because country spirit is a form of alcohol which is very widely used by the people, and partly because spirituous liquors are generally regarded as more deleterious than fermented liquor, and the published statistics afford a more direct indication of the consumption of country spirit in specified areas than do those of toddy and foreign liquor. The quantity of spirit consumed and the revenue realised for the past ten years in the distillery areas of the Presidency are noted below :—

| Year. | Consumption in proof gallons. | Consumption per 100 of Population. | Revenue in lakhs (Imperial I). | | | Incidence of taxation per proof gallon. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Rentals. | Duty. | Total. | |
| | | P. gls. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. a. p. |
| 1911-12 .. | 1,628,178 | 4·1 | 35·34 | 91·01 | 126·35 | 7 11 4 |
| 1912-13 .. | 1,773,373 | 4·4 | 30·40 | 102·03 | 141·43 | 7 14 8 |
| 1913-14 .. | 1,782,032 | 4·4 | 48·81 | 108·03 | 156·84 | 8 11 9 |
| 1914-15 .. | 1,646,649 | 4·1 | 49·41 | 101·37 | 150·78 | 9 0 9 |
| 1915-16 .. | 1,491,470 | 3·7 | 44·49 | 95·12 | 139·61 | 9 3 5 |
| 1916-17 .. | 1,644,466 | 4·1 | 45·95 | 106·33 | 152·28 | 9 1 3 |
| 1917-18 .. | 1,648,150 | 4·1 | 50·67 | 112·03 | 162·70 | 9 9 8 |
| 1918-19 .. | 1,672,492 | 4·2 | 51·58 | 136·47 | 188·05 | 11 2 2 |
| 1919-20 .. | 1,988,688 | 4·9 | 61·32 | 157·93 | 219·25. | 11 2 0 |
| 1920-21 .. | 1,723,868 | 4·2 | 84·25 | 143·92 | 228·17 | 13 5 5 |

The revenue has increased by 80·6 per cent. while the increase in consumption is only 5·9 per cent. A part of the latter increase is due to increase in population (which the recent census shows to have been 2·2 per cent.) and part probably to decreased consumption of illicit liquor. In fact the consumption per 100 of population is very nearly the same. The average retail selling price was As. 2-3 per dram in 1911-12 against 4 annas per dram now. The figures given above clearly illustrate the fact that the increase in revenue does not represent an increase in

the quantity of spirits consumed. The consumption of country spirits rises and falls in accordance with the character of the season. Greater prosperity whether it be of the working or agricultural classes means increased consumption of liquor as well as of other commodities. The principal check on an increase in consumption due to this cause is to increase the price of liquor whether by raising still head duty or licence fee. It has always been the policy of the Government, where consumption has shown a tendency to rise, to increase the still-head duty in order to counteract the tendency by raising the price of liquor. The revenue figures noted above show that the taxation of liquor has been steadily increased while the figures of consumption show that the increase in taxation has been so graduated as to prevent an increase in consumption. Some increase is to be expected from the preventive arrangements for putting down illicit distillation becoming better organised and more effective and as out-still areas are brought under Contract Distillery system. Two thousand five hundred and sixty-four square miles have been added in the last ten years to the area under the Contract Distillery system. The total area under that system is now 126,123 square miles, and that under 'outstills' is 16,451. The figures of consumption may therefore be considered satisfactory.

*Foreign liquor.*—In the case of imported liquors, the duties leviable under the tariff for the time being in force are credited to Customs, and the excise revenue is derived only from licence fees for the privilege of sale. In the case of locally made spirits and beer excised at the tariff rate, the excise revenue includes both duty and licence fee. The tariff rate of duty on imported liquor was raised from Rs. 7 per proof gallon in 1908-09 to Rs. 18-12-0 in March 1921. Similarly on imported and locally made beer the duty was raised from 2 annas to As. 6-6 per gallon. Statistics of consumption of foreign liquor are not available previous to the year 1913-14. The figures of consumption (including imported and locally manufactured) and revenue since then are :—

| Year. | Revenue in lakhs | | | (Imperial Return I). | | Consumption. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Spirits. | Beer. | Total. | Spirits. | Wines. | Beer. |
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Gls. | Gls. | Gls. |
| 1913-14 .. | 6·90 | 2·14 | 9·04 | 162,164 | 29,520 | 602,784 |
| 1914-15 .. | 6·24 | 3·18 | 9·42 | 228,095 | 49,354 | 1,140,630 |
| 1915-16 .. | 5·98 | 3·62 | 9·60 | 173,781 | 24,924 | 845,051 |
| 1916-17 .. | 5·18 | 4·88 | 10·06 | 145,083 | 28,340 | 992,413 |
| 1917-18 .. | 5·56 | 6·11 | 11·67 | 124,390 | 25,933 | 815,917 |
| 1918-19 .. | 6·39 | 8·23 | 14·62 | 122,743 | 21,324 | 1,006,472 |
| 1919-20 .. | 11·17 | 9·30 | 20·47 | 176,399 | 26,216 | 942,461 |
| 1920-21 .. | 10·92 | 5·48 | 16·40 | 205,163 | 24,137 | 694,425 |

The increase in revenue under 'Spirits' amounts to 4·02 lakhs or 58 per cent. Of this 1·12 lakhs is due to increased vend fees and duty, while 2·90 lakhs is to be ascribed to increased consumption. The quantities of wines consumed have not risen. There was however during the period an increase in the consumption of beer in 1918-19 compared with 1913-14. This is to be attributed mainly to increased supplies for the army during the war period and the figures show a marked decline since 1918-19. Foreign liquor (shown under 'Spirits') is consumed by Europeans and Anglo-Indians and by the more well-to-do classes of Indians. It is not, as a rule, indulged in by the labouring class. There is reason to fear that the use of foreign liquor is spreading among educated Indians; but every endeavour is made to prevent the spread of this taste. The chief step taken in this direction is the reduction in the number of shops. Foreign liquor taverns and beer shops have been reduced from 53 and 34 in 1913-14 to 29 and 27 respectively in 1920-21. During this period the F. L. 2 shops have been reduced from 290 to 161. The rate of licence fee for the various foreign liquor licences has been vastly enhanced during the period as shown below :—

| | 1913-14 | 1920-21 |
|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. |
| F.L.—1 (wholesale licence) .. .. .. | 100 | 250 |
| F.L.—2 (retail licence) .. .. .. | 50 to 200 | 150 to 1,000 |
| F.L.—7 (hotel licence) .. .. .. | 25 to 150 | 25 to 250 |

The duty on spirits and beer has been raised with effect from 1st March 1921 by 66⅔ and 44 per cent. respectively.

*Toddy.*—Taking next toddy revenue, the figures are as under :—

| Toddy year (1st October to 31st September). | Number of trees tapped in terms of cocoanuts. | Revenue in lakhs. | | | Incidence of taxation per cocoanut. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rentals. | Tree-tax. | Total. | |
| 1911-12 .. | 2,242,918 | 73·47 | 70·46 | 143·93 | 6·4 |
| 1912-13 .. | 2,340,709 | 82·34 | 76·59 | 158·93 | 6·8 |
| 1913-14 .. | 2,361,595 | 91·47 | 79·51 | 170·98 | 7·2 |
| 1914-15 .. | 2,252,463 | 93·93 | 75·55 | 169·48 | 7·5 |
| 1915-16 .. | 2,163,223 | 84·20 | 74·95 | 159·15 | 7·4 |
| 1916-17 .. | 2,224,221 | 97·78 | 80·18 | 177·96 | 8·0 |
| 1917-18 .. | 2,352,900 | 112·49 | 84·75 | 197·24 | 8·4 |
| 1918-19 .. | 2,335,921 | 128·95 | 101·97 | 230·92 | 9·9 |
| 1919-20 .. | 2,493,432 | 149·17 | 109·29 | 258·46 | 10·4 |
| 1920-21 .. | 2,275,266 | 150·42 | 100·50 | 250·92 | 11·0 |
| | | | (Up to July 1921). | | |

The increase in revenue from tree-tax has been Rs. 38·83 lakhs in the years 1911-12 to 1919-20, but of this increase Rs. 27·78 lakhs or 72 per cent. is due to enhancement of rates of tree-tax, while only Rs. 11·05 lakhs is attributable to increase in the number of trees tapped. There has in fact been an increase in the latter number of only 11·2 per cent. The number of trees licensed per head of population in 1919-20 (the last year for which complete figures are available) was ·063 cocoanut as compared with ·056 in 1911-12. As the yield per tree varies with the season the statistics of trees tapped can give only a general indication of the consumption of toddy. The fluctuations in the consumption of toddy evidenced by the figures given above correspond more or less to those in the consumption of country spirits. The remarks made against country spirits apply *mutatis mutandis* to toddy.

*Opium and hemp drugs.*—Under opium and hemp drugs also the revenue has increased by 78 per cent. and 146 per cent. while the consumption has decreased by 13·3 and 5·8 per cent. respectively as shown by the following figures. It is probable that a portion of the fall in opium figures is due to greater vigilance exercised against the smuggling of it, but there is no doubt that consumption has also fallen a great deal.

| | Opium. | | | Hemp drugs. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year. | Consumption. | Revenue in lakhs (Imperial statement No. 1.) | Duty per seer. | Consumption. | Revenue in lakhs (Imperial Statement No. 1). | Duty per Seer. |
| | Seers. | Rs. | Rs. a. | Seers. | Rs. | Rs. a. |
| 1911-12 .. | 41,761 | 13·18 | 20 8 | 47,485 | 6·09 | 7 8 |
| 1912-13 .. | 39,533 | 15·14 | 25 8 | 52,478 | 6·82 | 7 8 |
| 1913-14 .. | 38,904 | 17·76 | 30 8 | 57,217 | 8·15 | 7 8 |
| 1914-15 .. | 38,858 | 18·09 | 30 8 | 49,713 | 9·38 | 10 0 |
| 1915-16 .. | 37,184 | 20·03 | 30 8 | 44,722 | 10·07 | 12 8 |
| 1916-17 .. | 36,596 | 19·24 | 30 8 | 47,773 | 10·44 | 12 8 |
| 1917-18 .. | 38,600 | 21·43 | 30 8 | 47,181 | 11·42 | 12 8 |
| 1918-19 .. | 37,100 | 21·48 | 32 8 | 45,052 | 12·98 | 15 0 |
| 1919-20 .. | 35,522 | 22·57 | 37 0 | 48,344 | 15·26 | 17 0 |
| 1920-21 .. | 36,211 | 23·44 | 37 0 | 44,735 | 15·01 | 17 8 |

It is clear from the foregoing paragraphs that though the total excise revenue has increased during the last ten years from 300·26 lakhs to 543·57 lakhs or by 81 per cent., the consumption per hundred of population has been almost stationary in the case of country spirit. In the case of opium and hemp drugs it has decreased by 13·3 per cent. and 5·8 per cent. respectively. As

for foreign liquor there has been no increase in consumption under wines. There is however an increase in the consumption of beer and spirits which, it is hoped, will receive an effective check by the enhancement of the duty already mentioned. The general position attained in this Presidency in regard to the consumption of intoxicants is therefore satisfactory and vindicates fully the soundness of the present excise policy. As for the revenue figures the increase involves an increase in the price of intoxicants to the consumer, which exercises a wholesome check on consumption. An increased revenue from measures whose primary object is to decrease consumption is not only justifiable, but it is also right if regarded from the temperance point of view; for it will not be possible otherwise to raise the price of intoxicants and the necessary corollary will be an increase in consumption.

*Reduction of shops.*—Besides the enhancement of taxation the most important of the measures laid down for giving effect to the excise policy are reduction of shops and the appointment of advisory committees. The following figures show how far the principle of reduction in the number of shops has been carried out during the last thirteen years :—

| Year. | Arrack shops. | Toddy shops. | Hemp drugs shops. | Opium shops. | Foreign liquor taverns, beer shops and F.L.-2 shops. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | No. | No. | No. | No. |
| 1908-09 .. | 10,123 | 17,161 | 633 | 1,118 | 467 |
| 1909-10 .. | 9,099 | 16,212 | 625 | 1,068 | 436 |
| 1910-11 .. | 8,900 | 15,829 | 628 | 1,028 | 426 |
| 1911-12 .. | 8,724 | 15,485 | 617 | 955 | 417 |
| 1912-13 .. | 8,324 | 14,474 | 538 | 851 | 387 |
| 1913-14 .. | 7,908 | 14,040 | 536 | 759 | 377 |
| 1914-15 .. | 7,649 | 13,169 | 537 | 740 | 376 |
| 1915-16 .. | 7,076 | 12,447 | 451 | 697 | 362 |
| 1916-17 .. | 6,871 | 11,851 | 418 | 658 | 320 |
| 1917-18 .. | 6,619 | 11,399 | 413 | 650 | 290 |
| 1918-19 .. | 6,352 | 11,034 | 413 | 638 | 267 |
| 1919-20 .. | 6,046 | 10,727 | 408 | 609 | 226 |
| 1920-21 .. | 6,008 | 10,463 | 402 | 603 | 217 |

It will be seen that the total number of vend licences has been reduced from 29,502 in 1908-09 to 17,693 in 1920-21 by no less than 40 per cent. and that the decrease has been marked under each kind of licence, *viz.*, 40 per cent. in the case of arrack shops, 39 per cent. toddy shops, 36 per cent. ganja, 46 per cent. opium and 53 per cent. foreign liquor shops. At the present time there is in Madras one shop on the average to every 2,394 of the population, a proportion which the Board believes will compare favourably with most other countries.

During the year 1920-21, 16 arrack and 16 toddy shops were opened for the first time in 32 villages in which there were no shops of the kind before. Most of these were really cases of transfer of shops to more suitable localities.

There is a general consensus of opinion among the local officers that the reduction of shops has not tended to decrease consumption. Many of the officers are of opinion that the limit up to which reduction is possible has been reached and that in some cases reduction has been carried too far. The reduction has tended to place the shops in the hands of rich capitalists who employ others to work them. As the middlemen's profits must therefore be larger, attempts have been made to push sales and devices for breaking the law have been developed into a fine art. In Salem the removal of all liquor shops outside the municipal limits merely led to an abnormal increase in the consumption in adjacent rural shops and to the prevalence of illicit practices within the town. Again at Ootacamund, where in deference to the recommendation of the Local Excise Advisory Committee shops were closed on Shandy days, the results were that the estate coolies stayed away a day longer from work to get their drink and also took to buying more expensive and harmful foreign liquor, in consequence of which the consumption of the latter rose several hundreds per cent. The Board has certain information that the extensive closure of shops in such towns as Vizagapatam, Bezwada, etc., has led to wholesale hawking of liquor through the streets, *i.e.*, to uncontrolled sales in unlicensed premises and by unlicensed persons. The maximum quantity permitted to be possessed has been brought from licensed shops by paid transporters, stocked in unlicensed shops and there sold usually by short measure

or in a diluted form. Prostitutes have been largely used by these unlicensed hawkers to push their wares. Further, the absence of shops within reasonable distance of home has led many men to purchase a bottle at a time. Instead of going to the arrack shop and having there one drink a day, they stay at home and drink more. Not only that, but the presence of a bottle of arrack in the home has led the man's wife and son to develop a taste for alcohol, from which they might have been free if the drink had never been brought nearer to them. And again, the closure of shops has led to a concentration of drinking in a few shops. This undoubtedly is an evil. On the one hand it leads to the habitual drinker consuming more. It is not difficult for most people to realise the effect of a crowd, noise and brightness in leading a man to the persuasion that " another little drink would not do him any harm. " On the other hand this concentration makes the drinking more obvious to passers-by and attracts their attention and, if they live near, annoys them more. The great difficulties which have recently been experienced in securing suitable sites for the location of shops are no doubt due to the fact that the few remaining shops do now cause more inconvenience to neighbouring residents. There is an overflow from them into the streets, which are apt to be blocked by noisy and quarrelsome crowds clamouring for admission. If the number of shops were really regulated by the needs of the community, for instance, if the number of shops in Madras were raised to 90, the minimum recommended by the Local Excise Committee in 1908, the Board has little doubt that the annoyance caused by them would be reduced and that consumption would also tend to fall.

*Excise Advisory Committees.*—Excise Advisory Committees were first constituted in municipalities in 1908 and in unions in 1914. Power has also been given to Collectors to form Excise Advisory Committees in unions having a population of not less than 8,000 inhabitants. Each Advisory Committee consists of three official and three non-official members. The President (an official) has power to co-opt an additional non-official member from those classes of the community who do not regard drinking *per se* as a vice when representation of those classes is not already secured by the personnel of the municipal or union members of the Committee. Definite instructions have also been issued to the effect that the Committees should meet twice in a year. There are Advisory Committees in all municipalities and in 171 unions. The recommendations made by these Committees in regard to the closure and change of sites of shops and the extent to which effect was given to such recommendations will be seen from the figures given below :—

| Year. | Closure of shops. | | Change of sites. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Recommended by the Committee. | Accepted by the Collector. | Recommended by the Committee. | Accepted by the Collector. |
| 1914-15 .. .. | 101 | 98 | 105 | 89 |
| 1915-16 .. .. | 80 | 69 | 70 | 60 |
| 1916-17 .. .. | 53 | 41 | 64 | 51 |
| 1917-18 .. .. | 27 | 24 | 72 | 58 |
| 1918-19 .. .. | 67 | 60 | 120 | 112 |
| 1919-20 .. .. | 72 | 59 | 134 | 127 |
| 1920-21 .. .. | 59 | 51 | 155 | 115 |

Reductions in shops are also effected by Collectors independently of the recommendation of the Committees, on complaints of the public, or recommendations of the Police, Land Revenue, Abkari and other departments or of Local Boards.

As a measure of local control, the Excise Advisory Committee for the City of Madras has been replaced by an Excise Licensing Board with power to determine the number and location of shops for the sale of intoxicants.

*Location of shops.*—The question of location of shops has come to much prominence in recent years. The selection of a site is almost always difficult and it must generally be the result of a compromise of conflicting considerations. Instructions issued on the subject are that rural shops must not be located without permission within a furlong of a metalled road; that when shops on a roadside are sanctioned in rural areas the minimum distance between such shops should ordinarily be five miles, that sites selected should be so far public that the persons entering the shops do not escape attention, and that, where possible, the shops should be located on Government land. To ensure that these instructions are carried out, it has been made a part of the routine of an excise officer's inspection to say whether a shop is situated in an undesirable site or not and to propose remedies. A large number of roadside shops has already been removed. The closure of all shops that existed only to supply occasional demand, *e. g.*, on a market day, has also been effected. Further in regard to the location of shops in planting areas the following general principles have been laid down for adoption: (1) that the outlying shops in planting areas in all but the large centres of population should be closed and at the same time the existing check on illicit practices should be increased in co-operation with the planters concerned, and (2) that the hours of sale of liquor on Sundays, market and festival days in shops to which estate

labour resorts should be restricted. The necessity for caution in the application of such restrictions has been illustrated in the case of Ootacamund already referred to.

*Hours of sale.*—Another measure on which great stress is laid by the temperance workers is the restriction of the hours of sale. The closing hour has been fixed at 8 p.m. for all kinds of shops, and the opening hour at 9-30 a.m. in the case of arrack shops, foreign liquor taverns and beer shops, and at sunrise in respect of the remaining shops. Following the example of the Central Control Board (Liquor traffic), Collectors have been empowered to close shops within three furlongs of factories, mills and other large centres of labour and where that is not practicable to close them on week days from 11-30 a.m. to 1-30 p.m. and on the afternoons of paydays, and to allow sales on Sundays only between 11-30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Further curtailment of the hours would not reduce consumption; it would probably lead to secret sales during prohibited hours and create hardship by rendering criminal what is now permissible. Collectors have also been authorised to insert special conditions in licenses providing for the closure of shops during fairs and festivals and on market days.

*Reduction in the strength of liquor.*—A measure that was urged on temperance grounds in the Legislative Council was reduction in the strength of country spirit sold. In 1914-15 the strength of liquor issued to nine districts was reduced from 30° to 32° U.P. A further reduction to 34° U.P. was made in 1917-18 with effect from 1st April 1918; the general issue strength of arrack throughout the Presidency has been reduced to 35° U.P.

In order to encourage the consumption of weak liquor, Collectors were given discretion to license shops for the sale of 60° U.P. only, the liquor having an advantage of 10 annas per proof gallon in duty. This experiment was tried in seven districts in 1918-19 when 35 shops were opened. In 1919-20 it was extended to eleven more districts where 53 additional shops were sold for the exclusive sale of 60° U.P. liquor. The reduction in the strength had little effect on the total consumption of spirit. The experience gained went to show that 60° U.P. liquor attracted certain classes of consumers through its cheapness, but that it was not popular where stronger liquor could be obtained without much difficulty. It was also stated that young men found it easier to begin on 60° U.P. liquor and that it had the effect of increasing the number of arrack drinkers. The experiment did not in any way tend to check consumption and it was discontinued from 1st April 1921.

*Temperance measures.*—Another reform urged is that Government should not merely maintain a negative attitude on the side of abstinence, but should adopt a positive one by providing counter-attraction for liquor shops and by introducing temperance teaching in schools. An experiment in the way of opening tea and coffee shops as counter-attractions to the liquor shop was tried for a few years. It was not successful and in most places it had a natural death. With a view to adapt as far as possible the plan of the Workmen's Canteen, which has been so successful in England, to Indian conditions, a coolies' canteen was opened at the Salt Cotaurs Depôt under the management of Young Men's Christian Association for the benefit of the large number of coolies employed there. But it was abolished from 1st February 1921 as it did not work well. As regards temperance teaching in schools, text-books in English and the vernaculars containing lessons on the evils of drink and the benefits of temperance are in use. Other means employed are illustrative matter such as stories from the ancient classics of India, charts and pictures showing diagramatically the effect of intemperance and lantern slides. The teaching staff is further advised by inspecting officers to interest themselves actively on the work of educating the pupils in the subject.

The principal plank on which the agitators of temperance stand is the abolition of the auction system in the disposal of shops. The arguments for and against the system have been discussed so often that it seems unnecessary to recapitulate them here. In Bombay the fixed fee system was adopted in lieu of auction and this experiment was closely watched by the Government of India. The experiment was finally abandoned in Bombay in 1917-18 and the observations of the Commissioner of Excise, Bombay, made in that connexion and extracted below finally dispose of the question of the unsuitability of the fixed fee system :—

" I brought to the notice of Government that under the latter (fixed fee) system the fee was fixed on the basis of a maximum selling price which it was impossible to enforce and on the assumption that the shopkeeper, being guaranteed a reasonable profit, would sell full measure, whereas he notoriously sold short measure and obtained immense profits thereby; that a very wealthy class of shopkeepers was being created; that the fixity of tenure which the system was intended to give the licensee so long as he conducted his business properly was likely to develop into vested interests; that the system did not ensure a better class of licensee since all alike, under whatever licensing system, were guilty of selling short measure and made all the profit they could legitimately or otherwise; that the system led to gross dishonesty among the excise staff, a large proportion of whom were in the regular pay of licensees, who found it well worth their while to employ this means of obtaining the good will of excise officers and inducing them to turn a blind eye on their malpractices, and finally that the system, besides unduly enriching shopkeepers, involved a serious loss of State revenue."

It would appear from the foregoing paragraphs that the policy pursued in the past and the measures laid down for giving effect to it have been successfully carried out in this Presidency. It has resulted in checking the consumption of country spirit and toddy and definitely decreasing the consumption of opium and hemp drugs. There is therefore no need to look with apprehension on the large increase in revenue, which has only increased the retail price of intoxicants and thus helped the cause of temperance by checking consumption better than any other method.

While this report is being written, keenly organized efforts are being made to prevent the sale of toddy shops for the ensuing lease by methods which, though ostensibly "peaceful", amount in most cases to intimidation of most oppressive kind. But it earnestly desires to bring one prominent fact to the notice of any genuine temperance reformer who may have allied himself temporarily with the non-co-operator in an agitation which in its unscrupulous interference with individual liberty is surpassing anything experienced in the history of the much abused bureaucracy. This is that in South India the sources of illicit supply are far more accessible to the regular drinker than in any European country. If the shops are closed, liquor can be had from almost any palm with no more skill than is required to cut an incision or dress a spathe and no more apparatus than a knife and a toddy pot. In a country where so large a proportion of the lower or labouring class are accustomed to the use of liquor, where every man can (so to speak) have his own beer tap in his own back garden and where the extensive topes which cover most of the country side can immediately take the place of the elaborate breweries of Europe, it is futile to imagine that the closure of shops will have any permanently appreciable effect in stopping recourse to alcohol. If the policy in question were accepted and the shops remain closed, one of two results must follow: (I) drinking will go on unchecked and uncontrolled, liquor being obtainable at a tithe of its present cost, with a loss of Rs. 543 lakhs of revenue to Government, or (II) the preventive establishment will have to be immensely increased, almost every village constantly patrolled and the agricultural and tapping classes would be subjected to the oppression of a host of petty officials, while the field for blackmail of private individuals and for the corruption of officials would be vastly expanded. Even so, it is unlikely that more preventive activity could cope with the problem. The majority of the population would be either apathetic or in actual sympathy with the drinkers and experience has amply shown that, under such conditions, more preventive activity cannot be an adequate substitute for the provision of a reasonable licit and taxed supply. In the face of these considerations the Board would urge those who desire to combat the evils of drunkenness by wholesale closure of shops to realise the shortsightedness of the policy they are following and to adopt the more radical, if less ostentatious, method of removing the desire for alcohol and not the sources of illicit supplies.

---

*Supplementary Replies of Mr. J. P. Brander.*

I wish to supplement my written replies to the questionaire of the Excise Committee by the following remarks.

2. I am in the fullest sympathy with all practical efforts to reduce or restrain excessive drinking and keep down consumption.

3. Restrictions on country liquor mostly have taken the following forms :—

(*1*) Increase of still head duty. An increase was made in 1922-23, in terms of proof spirit, thus increasing the price of liquor.

(*2*) Restriction of days and hours of sale.

(*3*) Reduction in shops.

(*4*) Reduction in number of bottles that can be sold at a time from 6 to 1.

(*5*) Reduction in strength of liquor.

(*6*) Rationing of quantities supplied to shops.

4. It has been recognised that under the first three heads as much as is possible at present has been done in Bombay City. The Advisory Committee, a democratically appointed body, held that further reduction of shops would not reduce consumption, but merely transfer the customers to the other shops and thus favour capitalists. In shops for most kinds of liquor great reductions in numbers have as I stated been made in the last 22 years in spite of a vast increase of population, *viz.*, 4 lakhs.

5. For cutting down liquor consumption, the last three methods are now chiefly relied on, *viz.*, reduction of bottles from 6 to 1, reduction in strength of liquor, and the rationing of quantity by reduction of the quantity of country liquor allowed to be sold by 10 per cent. per annum on the figures of 1920-21, *i.e.*, in short, partial prohibition to lead to total prohibition nine years hence.

6. Experience shows that this policy, along with increase of still head duty, is proving a failure, as regards reducing consumption of liquor, *i. e.*, liquor generally as distinct from country liquor.

7. As regards reduction of number of bottles, a shopman cannot remember, even if he wanted to, who bought early in the day. A man wanting six bottles has only to return six times or send in a friend, or go to six shops.

8. As regards reduction in strength, the result has been to drive people to consume foreign liquor in greatly increased quantity. Foreign liquor is 25 Under Proof, and people prefer it to the watery 40 Under Proof country liquor.

9. As regards rationing, this has merely the effect of sending people, when a shop runs short, to other shops. The reduction has only operated one year, so the full results cannot yet be seen. It is quite clear however that the only result will be to drive the people to foreign liquor, illicit country liquor, and intoxicating drugs, all of which are or will be available.

10. It may be noted that the Advisory Committee of Bombay City, a popularly appointed body, opposed the rationing idea.

11. That the consumption of foreign liquor has gone up as that of country liquor gone down is proved by the books of the foreign liquor sellers which show an increase for 1922-23 of 18,000 bulk gallons, but they always greatly understate the sales, and their books are unreliable. The Excise staff consider that the consumption of foreign liquor has gone up almost as much as that of country liquor has gone down. The result to the revenues of the Bombay Government is disastrous. The issue of country liquor for Bombay City in 1922-23 showed a decrease of 102,727 proof gallons on the figures of the previous year. The Bombay Government lost 13 lakhs still head duty on this, *viz.*, still head duty at Rs. 12-14-8 a proof gallon. It can be safely assumed that a large amount of these 13 lakhs was spent on increased consumption of foreign liquor, the whole duty on which goes, as customs dues, to the Government of India, who have thus profited by many lakhs at the expense of the Government of Bombay. This too is the loss for Bombay City alone. When figures for the Presidency are considered the loss must be far greater.

12. As regards reduction of shops in Bombay City the Excise Staff hold, and the Advisory Committee agree, that reduction has no effect in reducing consumption, so should not be adopted. It is unfair to the shops that are closed. It is obvious that the rationing now in force is a method of reduction which reduces the amount of country liquor sold in all shops, and so is fairer in incidence than cutting down shops here and there.

13. That the former policy of the Excise Department was successful in reducing the consumption is clear from the fact that in 1920-21 the consumption in Bombay City per head was ·71 proof gallon, in 1901-02, ·84, and ·62 in 1921-22.

14. Illicit distillation and smuggling of illicit liquor are not known to have occurred so far in Bombay City, but are known to have increased greatly in the mofussil as the result of the new restrictions, which thus are increasing intemperance and lawlessness. In Glasgow a number of illicit stills were recently detected. They had started because of the high prices of licit whisky.

15. The partial and increasing prohibition policy is thus collapsing generally.

16. The comparative effect of reasonable restrictions compared with restrictions so severe as to be prohibitory in effect is well illustrated by the case of Scotland. In a recent issue of a magazine it was stated that Scotland formerly used to drink ale and light French wines such as claret. Heavy duties were imposed on these. This had the effect of largely decreasing their consumption, and Scotland took instead to drinking whisky and became as regards the working classes an intemperate nation to a large extent. Recently, however, owing to rise in Excise duty whisky costs 3 or 4 times the pre-war price. Drunkenness has greatly declined, and the rise in price is admitted to be an excellent temperance measure.

17. The above facts show the futility of restricting and gradually abolishing the supply of country liquor when foreign liquor and illicit country liquor can always be obtained. It is extremely unlikely that the Government of India will ever consent to any restrictions on import of or distribution of foreign liquor. The majority of Europeans and probably of Anglo-Indians consider the moderate use of it necessary to health, and certainly moderate use does not seem to do them any physical harm. Not unlikely, it benefits their health by its cheering and soothing effect at the end of a hard day's toil in an exhausting climate. The percentage of Europeans and Anglo-Indians who drink to excess is not great, so there is no justification for cutting off their supply. Hence Indians too will always be able to get foreign liquor. It is at any rate clear that it is quite useless to tackle the liquor question as a provincial Government question alone. Provincial Governments, the Central Government, Indian States and the French and Portuguese possessions in India would all have to adopt a common policy.

18. Again reduction of country liquor or foreign liquor shops or abolishing them entirely will only lead as in other countries to formation of drinking clubs among the working classes. They will buy liquor wholesale just as any other better class European, Parsee or Indian club does, and men will probably drink far more individually than now when a man can get his single drink at a shop and go home.

19. The policy of partial prohibition to end in complete prohibition is in my opinion autocratic, not democratic. At least seventy per cent. of the male workers in Bombay City and ninety per cent., if not more of male workers in rural tracts such as Gujarat and the Konkan where drinking facilities abound, are known to be regular drinkers. They do not want prohibition, partial or total, and consider moderate drinking necessary to health and comfort. At present owing to want of education they have few or no representatives of their own class on the various elected bodies. It does not seem democratic or in consonance with the principles of liberty to force on them, even in their supposed interests, a policy which they do not desire.

20. Even if complete prohibition of country liquor and foreign liquor were instituted, manufacture of illicit country liquor will increase by leaps and bounds. The country has every facility for it, and local sentiment will be strongly in favour of it. There will be no excise revenue to maintain a preventive staff. The Indian States rulers with a few exceptions are unlikely to agree to restrict in practice manufacture in their territory and smuggling of it into British India. These rulers make very large sums from the liquor revenue. The country will thus revert to that condition of general intemperance and debauchery prevalent in the drinking tracts before British administration was instituted and described vividly on page 88 of the Excise Committee's report of 1905.

21. At the same time, the excise and customs revenue from liquor, which supports education and other public activities will have been thrown away uselessly. The whole administrative system will be upset. No other system of direct or indirect taxation which could yield the necessary revenue is feasible in my opinion.

22. These inevitable results, both fiscal and sociological, have only to be faced for one to realise that the whole policy of partial and total prohibition is impracticable.

23. The Excise Department as administered up to 1920-21 has been the greatest institution in the country for temperance reform, reduction of drinking and promotion of sobriety. People do not realise that Government by means of this Department have succeeded in limiting liquor consumption and at the same time relieving the public from other taxation far more successfully than in any country of Europe known to me. The very success of the Excise Department in producing revenue has brought on it undeserved odium. Shortsighted people have formed the idea that increased revenue means increased consumption, whereas the contrary is the case. Increased revenue has meant reduction of consumption of licit liquor, preventing increase of consumption of the same, and reduction of consumption of illicit liquor. Hence the only sound policy for the State, as distinct from private effort, is to continue the old policy of the Excise Department, and aim at temperance and moderation by restriction, not prohibition.

24. The results of attempted prohibition in America are a sufficient warning. The general testimony of disinterested foreign visitors is that the prohibition secured is only prohibition of licit liquor. Illicit liquor can everywhere be secured. Classes that did not drink before are taking to drink, out of the fun of evading the law. A demoralising spirit of lawlessness is growing. The general opinion is that the prohibition policy will have to be greatly modified.

25. The auction system should be retained and the fixed fee system advocated by the Bombay City Licensed Victuallers' Association should not be reverted to. The auction system gives the maximum profit to the State instead of to the liquor sellers as was the case with the former fixed fee system.

26. I have one important suggestion to make. It is understood that Sir George Curtis who did so much to reform the Excise system in Khandesh once suggested something similar there.

27. The country liquor shops in Bombay City have largely become something like the "tied" public houses and vested interests unfortunately grown up in the United Kingdom in connection with the liquor trade. Owing both to the Rent Act and the difficulty at any time of getting a new shop site for a license, the present country liquor shops have largely become a monopoly of the present holders. There is no real competition at the auctions. Competitors do not bid as they know that they cannot secure shop-sites. Thus Government secure far less license fees than they would under a system of free competition. This is clearly proved from the fact that in the rare cases when there is real competition for a license, the bidding at the annual auctions goes up enormously and sometimes two or three times the price of the average run of shops is secured. The present system favours capitalists. It is well known that some capitalists hold 20 to 25 shops though not in their name. This also favours rings. In some localities licensees combine to keep up prices of liquor. This monopoly system should be effectually stopped and Government, *i.e.*, the public, secure their legitimate share of the liquor revenue, by Government acquiring either by agreement or if necessary by the Land Acquisition Act, either permanently or on lease for a term of years, shop buildings equal in number to the present number of shops, both for country liquor, toddy, foreign 'on', and refreshment rooms. The right of selling liquor or toddy in these shops should be put up to auction annually. Government and the public will be astonished at the enormous increase of revenue that will thus be

secured. It can be guaranteed that twice or thrice the existing license fees, now about thirty eight lakhs per annum for Bombay City, will be secured. The same system should be applied all over the Presidency. The increased revenue thus obtainable will solve the problem of compulsory primary education for the Presidency and efficient secondary education. There will of course be great opposition by the present monopolists, attempts to create prejudice, and so on. But the principle of State management of the liquor traffic has been dopted, it is believed, in some countries of Europe. We have it partly in India in the State supply of country liquor to shops. From this to the State supply of premises is a short step. Better control over the retail trader and over location of shops would be the result. Nor could the price to consumers be increased. Licensees would restrict their bids so as to be able in their selling prices to compete with possible illicit liquor supplied.

28. I have no doubt that, novel as the above sugestion may seem, public opinion will soon cease to be content with the bulk of the profits going as now to the liquor sellers, and will insist on securing them for public purposes. The above system is the way to secure them.

## ORAL EVIDENCE.

Mr. BRANDER replied to the President :—" I think that in the last year or two Government have deviated from their former policy, by making licit liquor less able to compete with illicit liquor. Weakening of strength is one way in which the former policy has not been followed consistently ; also, in some places in the mofussil the reduction of shops has gone too far. The result of these deviations is that in Bombay City they increasingly resort to foreign liquor, with the result of transferring an enormous amount of revenue from the Government of Bombay to the Government of India. (Please see paragraph 11 of my supplementary note.)

" We cannot give the exact figures of foreign liquor consumption. For one thing, the books kept by the foreign liquor sellers are always unreliable. They never show anything like the full amount of the true sales. But even these books show an increase of 18,000 bulk gallons.

" I hear that the result of reducing shops in the mofussil is that there is a great deal of increase of illicit drinking. When there is foreign territory near a place where shops are closed our drinking population goes over the border in very large numbers and drink in foreign territory.

" There is a popularly elected advisory committee for Bombay City. There are three men from each ward of the municipal members, and they are appointed by the corporation ; in addition to them there is the Municipal Commissioner, the Collector and the Commissioner of Police. There are in all 21 members on the committee who are popular representatives, and there are 3 nominated officials. Some of the suggestions of individual members of the ward concerned have not been of any use. In the case of a committee like this it is only as a rule a member or two of that particular ward who give any definite opinion about a particular shop, and it has been found that these opinions in practice have not been of much value. On the other hand, on general questions the advisory committee have given quite valuable opinions. What happens is that supposing a man who outbids an old licensee applies for a shop site in that locality, the old licensee in that locality naturally does not like a competitor to come in, and it is pretty obvious that the old licensee comes to the members of the advisory committee for the ward concerned, and gets them to give an opinion in favour of keeping out the other man.

" The meeting referred to in paragraph 3 of my report was a general meeting, but if there is any case of a particular shop which comes up and that particular case has to be decided, it is customary to consult only the members of the particular ward, and not the whole committee. Minutes of meetings of the advisory committee are kept.

" I do not think the time has yet come for entrusting the committees with power. It depends really on the progress of the general sense of responsibility and democratic spirit in a country. I believe even in England, which is a more advanced democratic country, the licenses are decided by the J.Ps., who are not popularly elected but appointed by the Crown. In Bombay I would still keep the committees as advisory, the final decision to rest with the department. In practice what happens is that the Collector, when he disagrees with the view of the Committee, states his reasons and refers the matter to the Commissioner.

" I am not in favour of local option at present, because I think the local people concerned are not yet alive to general considerations of policy which Government has to take into consideration.

" I think it is quite possible to distil illicitly in cities. For instance, in the City of Glasgow in Scotland a year or two ago 8 illicit stills were detected ; but people are more likely to resort to illicit distillation in rural areas than in towns.

" The raising of still-head duty is a question which has to be decided in accordance with the facts of each locality and the time. Consumption varies from place to place and from time to time. If country liquor is watered down so much as at present, people will take to

foreign liquor, which is stronger. The prices of country and foreign liquor should be about equal; their strength also should be about the same.

"In Bombay country liquor shops are open from 10-30 a.m. to 9-30 p.m., toddy shops from 6-30 a.m. to 9-30 p.m., foreign liquor shops 'on' and 'off' from 10-30 a. m. to 9-30 p. m. and refreshment rooms from 10-30 a. m. till 9-30 p. m. and with special permission till 11 p. m. Further reduction of hours is unnecessary.

"The excise staff are of opinion, by observation, that about 70 per cent. of the labourers drink, and that the excessive drinkers are less than 10 per cent. probably about 5. Their observation was probably mostly outside the liquor shops, on the way and as the men went home. I would not penalise any man for being the worse for liquor unless he is disorderly. It may lead to too much police persecution. I also think that a man who drinks to excess often requires to be treated from a medical point of view than as a criminal. Very often a man who comes under strong religious influences gives it up, but it is doubtful if Government can do anything to prevent excessive drinking by a certain number of *habitués*.

"Those who do not drink to such an extent as to injure their health or use up too much of the income of the family will be moderate drinkers, but that varies with the income of each man and it cannot be put on a basis of figures. Regulating the quantity to be given to an individual is not at all practicable in India. It is better, by education and persuasion to bring about a general feeling that drinking to excess is a social offence."

To Mr. Madon:—"There is a certain number of country liquor, foreign 'on' and toddy shops in Bombay City which have been continued from previous times. They are called privileged shops. We do not put them up to auction. We fix the price for them on the average of all the prices obtained for the auctioned shops. When the owner of that shop dies, the shop ceases to be a privileged one, and is put up to auction. There are at present about 63 privileged shops out of a total of 238 country liquor, 36 foreign 'on' shops and 127 toddy shops, and no more privileged shops are created now.

"Rationing in Bombay for the first year was a reduction of 10 per cent. on the sale of the particular shop for 1920-21; this year again, there is a further 10 per cent. reduction on that.

"It is quite correct that shops which have been rationed for a month sometimes exhaust their quantity by the 23rd of the month, and apply for an advance from the next month's allotment. If shops are rationed for a year, it is possible that by the tenth month they may exhaust their supply, and there would be a temptation to get liquor illicitly, particularly in the mofussil. In Bombay a man can go to another shop. When the shops found that their supply was running short, they sold less quantity. Generally, very few of the shops had to close for three or four days in a month. About 50 shops must have taken their ration in advance from the next month's allotment, but the year's ration was never exceeded.

"We auction foreign liquor 'on' shops." But there is not really any real competition as a rule. In practice, we just estimate the figure at which it should be given and they pay that price. There are as regards license fees three classes of refreshment rooms according to the quantity of sales.

"If foreign liquor is rationed along with country liquor, there may be illicit importation into Bombay; but I am opposed to rationing either liquor."

To the President:—"During the strike in Bombay, the shops were closed for about a month, and there were no cases of illicit distillation or importation, but there were many cases of transportation; I cannot give the exact number."

To Dr. Patil:—"The mill hands would go and drink even if the shops were in a back street. Shops close to the mills may act as a temptation to some extent. Excessive drinking will cause demoralisation among many persons, but I do not think there is any special point in removing the shops from where they are at present. To some extent drinking may cause distress to some families, but removing the shops will not prevent that happening. It is quite true that a great deal of harm is done by drink, but what I feel is that if you impose prohibitive measures, you may bring about worse evils than the ones which you are trying to prevent; you may drive people to intoxicating drugs and illicit liquor. If drink is made cheaper, they will drink more with disastrous effects.

"Temperance teaching in primary schools will not be of much use, because the children are not of enough age to understand it, but in secondary schools and colleges it may be useful.

"Subsidising temperance associations is pure waste of money, because any good moral or religious movement like that has got to come from the people themselves, and if they are enthusiastic about it, it is quite certain that they will find the necessary funds themselves."

To Rao Saheb Desai:—"I do not think prohibition will succeed if religious mahants and caste panchayats were to back it up.

"The coupon system will not work in practice. It would be far too complicated.

" In all departments there is a certain amount of inevitable corruption going on, but as regards the Excise Department, the auction system has removed a great deal of it.

" All the drinkers will resort to illicitly distilled liquor if prohibition is introduced ; they will get it from whatever source they can. Even in America where there is the strictest prohibition, you can get liquor. In some parts of America, the closing down of saloons has done some good. I am pretty certain that they will have to modify their policy to a large extent. "

*P. S.*—On going over the above transcribed notes of my oral evidence, I wish to add as follows.

As regards the statement in paragraph 13 of my note replying to the Questionaire of the Excise Committee where I said the Advisory Committees are not of much use as regards suggestions, I had in mind the suggestions to close particular shops made by some individual members of the Ward where the shop or shops in question were situated. I gave in paragraph 3 of my report No. C. R.-697 of 9th January 1922 attached to the above note detailed examples of such suggestions, which in my opinion were unsound and in some cases unreasonable. When a question regarding a single shop arises it is usual to consult only the Advisory Committee members of the Ward where the shop is situated, *plus* the Municipal Commissioner and the Commissioner of Police. I have however made it clear in my oral evidence before the Excise Committee that I have found the general body of the Bombay City Advisory Committee useful, not only as a useful link between the local bodies and local people on the one hand and the Executive Department of Government on the other, but also as having given valuable opinions on general questions, after the facts and figures were placed before the Advisory Committee by the Excise Department.

J. P. BRANDER,
Collector of Bombay

No. 136.

REPLIES OF Mr. J. E. B. HOTSON,* I.C.S., COLLECTOR OF SUKKUR.

1. I. C. S. 20 years life in and near India, a lifelong interest in all social questions of practical experience of excise administration, 1¾ years as Collector of Larkana, three months as Collector of Sukkur.

2 (*a*) I subscribe to the policy quoted in the extract from the Resolution of the Government of India, but I think in practice Government has recently been too much swayed by the clamour of prohibition faddists and has not given sufficient consideration to the rights of moderate drinkers.

(*b*) I have not served in India proper since early in 1915 until three months ago, and therefore have not had much opportunity of judging the results of the policy. So far as I have observed results, they consist in increased profits to a limited number of licensees, and forcible deprivation of liquor to all the residents of outlying villages. Another result, of mixed origin, is the increased use by the respectable classes of foreign liquors of very poor quality instead of country liquor.

3 (*a*) More active measures for the repression of illicit distillation and smuggling.

(*b*) The provision of a greater number of varieties of liquor, differing in flavour and strength and many of them much weaker than the present kinds.

(*c*) If it were practicable, I should like to see all shops run by the state through paid agents or by associations, having for their object no profit, but the provision of clean and good drink (and food too, if possible,) and the promotion of genuine temperance: the profits to be shared between the State and local improvements or charities.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition. I observe that such being the case I am not required to give reasons.

5. I am not asked to answer these questions and I don't believe any body can.

6. I think increased temperance in one generation will be followed by greater temperance in the next, intemperance being the result of weakness, often inherited, while temperance is the result of strength which can be developed and transmitted. Moreover, as temperance increases, the social reprobation of intemperance will also increase, and, together with the greater rarity of bad example, will have greater deterrent effect. But prohibition goes against a very strong natural instinct, and its effects will therefore not be cumulative or lasting.

7. No answer required.

8. This seems to answer itself.

9. I do not think it necessary "to gradually reduce" the proper use of liquor. I have already suggested the ideal method of controlling its use and checking its improper use.

10. (*a*) Rationing is just about to be introduced into this district. It seems to me a clumsy and unfair device.

(*b*) Under present circumstances we have practically reached the limit up to which prices can be increased. As it is, there is as much smuggled liquor drunk in parts of this district as excise-paid liquor.

(*c*) Here also we have already reached, if not passed, the fair limit. In towns some competition is healthy, and in country districts, if a man has to walk too far for his drink, he will be the more likely to drink too much when he reaches the shop.

(*d*) Shops are now shut on certain holidays when there is a special risk of excessive drinking. Proposals for adding days to this list should be considered on their merits. There is no intrinsic advantage in preventing drunkenness on Tuesday if thereby more people are to get drunk on Wednesday. As for reducing the number of hours, I have recently considered that very point and find that different classes of customers frequent the shops at different hours, so that any great reduction in hours would mean inconvenience to a number of thoroughly respectable persons.

(*e*) This I have already suggested.

(*f*) A good deal is being done in this direction already. The object should be to keep the shops out of the crowded streets, while not allowing them to be put in obscure lanes or slums where excesses would be difficult to check.

(*g*) The increases in duty are already doing this. Greater control should be exercised over the quality of the foreign liquors imported, and over the generally deleterious imitations of them made in India.

(*h*) I do not know what kinds of licenses are meant.

(*i*) I do not think the results of the provisions of D. O. R. A. to this end have been such as to encourage imitation. Theoretically it is desirable that children should not be allowed to drink liquor, but how is it to be effected ?

* This witness could not appear for oral evidence.

(*j*) This can be considered when a Temperance Association which is not a Prohibition Association is founded. I have already suggested the sort of Association which is wanted.

(*k*) I am entirely against this. Liquor drunk with meals at a man's home is, by common experience, and even by medical theory, less harmful than that swallowed without food at a bar or shop.

My constructive proposals are in (3) (*c*).

11. Theoretically there is a good deal to be said for local option, but in practice it means the coercing of the dumb many by the noisy few. Occasionally the dumb few get excited, and then we see results like those of last year's local option poll in Scotland, which did immense harm to the cause of real temperance.

12. Not at present, because most of the members belong to classes who do not drink or only do so in private, and because prohibition is too much mixed up with politics in the present condition of India for any impartial consideration of the problem to be possible, at least in most local bodies. But in course of time the local bodies should I think become the licensing authorities.

When this happens, a financial arrangement would have to be made transferring the excise revenue to the local bodies, and indemnifying the general revenues from the income of the local bodies.

13. I think the Advisory Committees are useful, and do not recommend any change.

14. The amount of crime in this district directly attributable to drink is very small. In the towns a few labourers lose partly a day's work after a debauch, but the total loss is not great. The phrase " the evil of drink " appears to beg the question. There are other excesses which are responsible for far more disease, crime, and proverty in this district than drink.

15. I need not answer this.

16. Opium does far more harm than drink. Most of those who take liquor do so in moderation and can break off altogether without any harmful results. The opium habitue, even if the amount he consumed be small, cannot give it up : and the proportion of opium users who become addicted to it to such an extent as to impair, or even ruin, their physical, mental, and moral faculties is very great. The evil effects of *charas* are still more marked, and unfortunately, many of those who use *charas* belong to one of the various religious professions. Even *bhang* is probably responsible for more crimes of violence than liquor. Yet the Temperance Societies leave these drugs entirely alone, and even when asked, refuse to say a word in condemnation of their abuse.

17. I have no details on this point, though from time to time sad cases are heard of. The culprits are generally either poor women who are prevented from working by restless children, or servants left in charge of children who are too lazy to do their duty.

I would like to add a brief note on the question raised in (5) (*b*) which is one of very great importance for Sind, every single district of which has a joint boundary with one or more Indian States. The Sukkur district marches with no fewer than three, Khairpur, Jaisalmir and Bahawalpur, and in all different Agencies, and Baluchistan almost touches it. Not only liquor but opium and *bhang* are constantly smuggled and the existing excise staff is entirely inadequate to control the smugglers.

I may mention, since I may seem to have been severe on the Temperance Societies, that these Societies are well aware that smuggling is going on, but remain completely indifferent. There are a few genuine enthusiasts at the head of them, but they also contain many members who frankly rejoice at the increase in smuggling as inflicting an injury on the revenues of Government. The sever er our restrictions on exciseable goods the greater will be the profit of smuggling. The adoption of Temperance principles is not in sight in most Indian States at least. To overcome this evil, the proposals in my reply 3 (*c*) would be the most effective means.

No. 137.

REPLIES OF MR. B. H. SHRINGARPURE,* Member, Excise Advisory Committee, Thana City.

1. I am a pleader, a land owner and a member of the Excise Advisory Committee, and as such I have ample opportunities for forming an opinion on the excise question.

2. I do not quite approve of the policy of the Government of India as laid down in their Resolution dated the 7th September 1905. I do not think that it is the duty of Government to make due provision for drink for persons who drink in moderation. It is so difficult to define the word 'moderation'. A peg of whisky will upset one person, while another person will stand four pegs without showing signs of drunkenness. Here I have given an example of persons who drink. When a man begins to drink—he steadly increases the quantity, ultimately to his own ruin and that of his family too. So Government need make no provision for persons who drink. Taxing liquor as high as possible and reducing the number of shops are not sure remedies to effect temperance. In Thana the prices of country liquor have steadily increased and the number of shops, which was more than 30 some years ago, is now only 4, yet the consumption of liquor is much the same, if not more. The result is that the policy pursued by Government has not put an effective check on intemperance.

3. (*a*) Rationing of shops.

(*b*) Allowing 1 shop for a population of 15,000.

(*c*) Closing of shops at 7-30 p.m., opening hour being 11 a.m.

(*d*) Closing of shops on important holidays.

(*e*) Giving local option for locating the shops.

(*f*) Prohibiting removal of liquor outside the shops.

These conditions should be made applicable both to country and foreign liquor shops.

4. Total prohibition in 20 years time.

(*a*) There would be some illicit manufacture of liquor. But the quantity would be small and such liquor would not be available to many, not even to 5 per cent. of the population of a town or village.

(*b*) The existence of Indian States and Portuguese territory is not an insurmountable difficulty. The prices of liquor in States and in Portuguese territory are low compared to our prices. Yet practically we find that there is hardly any importation of liquor from these countries. So with the gradual prohibition, the present establishment will be fully able to cope with importation of any liquor from these territories. The Indian States should also be advised to follow the course of gradual and total prohibition.

(*c*) I don't suppose there would be any serious discontent amongst certain classes of the Presidency if their habits are interfered with. The Hindu and Mohamedan religion advocate total prohibition. If certain classes have formed the habit of drink, they can as well form the habit of temperance gradually.

(*d*) An additional establishment will not be necessary to prevent illicit distillation. When the number of shops is reduced and rationed, there will not be much work for the present establishment and it can be used for preventing illegal distillation. If Government servants accept bribes and connive at illegal distillation, that should be checked with a firm hand and if necessary by prosecuting such persons and dismissing them departmentally if no sufficient proof is forthcoming for a conviction in Court.

(*e*) Yes, people want some kind of intoxication or other. They are likely to go in for cocaine, opium, ganja, etc., but restriction may be placed on the sale of these articles and nobody should get them except for medicine and without a medical certificate.

6 I doubt the correctness of the proposition that prohibition may not be effective in the present generation. But as I am in favour of gradual prohibition I don't think it necessary to go more in detail into the question.

7. Legislation is the only means for total prohibition.

8. I should like the principle of prohibition extended to all liquors, country as well as foreign; but not to toddy and shindi because they contain some food and are not injurious to health. Besides, if sale of toddy and shindi is not prohibited people will go in for these and will not manufacture illicit liquor.

9. Answer unnecessary as I am in favour of total but gradual prohibition.

10. (*a*) Rationing of shops. The Bombay Government has reduced the sale of liquor by 5 per cent. for the next year. This system should be enforced year after year and you reach the goal in 20 years time. If in the meantime difficulties come in the way of administration they can be solved with the aid of the people and even by extending the period of total prohibition.

* Did not appear for oral evidence.

(*b*) If prices of country liquor are enormously increased, these people will have the temptation of going in for foreign liquor like rum. I am therefore against increasing the price of country liquor.

(*c*) There should be one shop for a population of 15,000.

(*d*) I am in favour of restricting the opening and closing hours of shops.

(*e*) I am against reducing the strength of liquor. A person requires a certain amount of intoxication. So he will drink more quantity if the liquor contains more water. By this method, *viz.*, reducing strength you cannot promote temperance.

(*f*) If shops are located after consulting the public opinion, that will have some effec on some persons. The masses won't care where the shop is located, but people from higher castes would think twice before they step into a shop inconveniently situated for them.

(*g*) Restrictions or prohibition must be common to country as well as foreign liquors. Otherwise people will go in for foreign liquors and the vice of drink will not be eradicated.

(*h*) I cannot answer this question.

(*i*) Liquor should not be sold except to adults.

(*j*) No good purpose will be served by aiding associations with money. Dramas, magic lantern plates, exhibitions and lectures create no effect upon persons given to drink. They are useful to those who have not tasted drink. Such lectures or lessons may be usefully given to students before they start life ; but you can hardly redeem drunkards.

(*k*) If drink is not allowed to be taken home, it will necessarily reduce the consumption. People from higher caste are afraid to go and drink in shops openly. They very often order out their drink through servants. Besides, in some castes, even in higher ones, women also drink. Such women will be free from the vice of drink if it cannot be procured at home from the shops. So this method is by far the best to check the consumption of liquor.

Even if gradual and total prohibition is found to be impracticable by Government, at least methods suggested in answer 10 should be brought into practice to check the growing evil of drink.

11, 12. Yes. Local option should be given to municipalities and local boards. These bodies should convene public meetings to ascertain public opinion and after giving due weight to the public opinion they should decide where the shops should be located. If the public bodies decide upon closing all the shops within their limits they must be held responsible for the revenue that would be sacrificed by the exercise of their powers.

13. No. The advisory committees have no powers at present. The members are allowed to express their opinions and that is all. If a particular proposition is carried by majority in the meeting of the advisory committee, it is very often not enforced in practice. I therefore propose that the name of the committee should be Excise Committees for the District of.....or for the Taluka.....The committee should consist of 9 members six elected by the public and 3 nominated by Government. The resolutions of such committees should be enforced if the same are consistent with the Abkari Act and rules framed thereunder. If they are not consistent, the District Magistrate should be authorized to send back the same to the Committees for reconsideration. If they are not reconsidered and made consistent with the Act, Government shall have power to veto the same. The elections should take place every year. A report of the working of the committees in the Presidency should be printed and sent to all the committees for their information and guidance. There should be at least one meeting of the committee every three months.

14. Drink plays a prominent part as far as crime is concerned. As a pleader and as an Assistant Public Prosecutor I have many opportunities in conducting criminal cases before Magistrates and Sessions Judges and I have found that in several cases the offence was committed when the accused was drunk. During the last year on account of picketing and caste resolutions prohibiting people from drink, there was a material reduction of criminal cases. This can be verified by the average number of cases decided in each court. It follows therefore that if steps are taken to prohibit drink or at least to reduce the consumption, there will be proportionate reduction in crime. The history of America before and after prohibition of drink is also a corroborative proof to my statement.

Drink also has a bad effect on the output of work. Temperance is encouraged in all countries in the army. Those soldiers who do not drink are better fighters. What is true with a soldier is equally true with a labourer or an artisan.

15. To make good the loss a tax should be levied on all lands whether agricultural or not or an additional tax may be levied on salt; people would willingly pay such an additional tax to get rid of the drink evil. The income-tax limit should be reduced to Rs. 500 and all should pay an additional income-tax to make good the loss. Public opinion should be invited for suggesting other taxes to make up the loss. Government should place before the public other taxes which may occur to them and invite their opinion.

16, 17. I have no remarks to offer, as I have not sufficient experience regarding opium.

B. H. SHRINGARPURE,

Member, Excise Advisory Committee
for Thana City.

I have fully discussed these questions with Mr. Shringarpure and I fully agree with him.

A. V. CHITRE,

Member, Advisory Committee for Thana City.

No. 138.

From

V. M. MORAY,* Esq., B.A.,

Member Representative of the Malvan Municipality on the Excise Committee, Malvan Taluka;

To

The PRESIDENT,
Malvan Municipality, Malvan.

*Malvan, 14th April 1922.*

Sir,

With reference to your endorsement dated 13th ultimo requesting my replies to the questions of the Excise Committee, Bombay, which are attached, I beg to reply as follows :—

Having left for the Southern Mahratta Country on the 18th ultimo, soon after the receipt of the papers under reference, on urgent private business and not having been able to return therefrom till this week, I am sorry I could not write and send my replies earlier as was desired.

1. I am a retired Assistant Collector of Salt and Excise in the Bombay Presidency and my present occupation is cultivation of my lands and public service. My opportunities for forming an opinion on the questions of the Excise Committee are derived from my experience of about eight years as Assistant Collector of Excise in the Bombay Presidency.

2. I consider the excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, No. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 as generally sound and reasonable, but I demur to the principle that "the most effective method of furthering this policy," that is, of promoting temperance, "is to make the tax upon liquor as high as it is possible to raise it". The raising of the tax on liquor has failed to bring about the desired result of reducing consumption to any appreciable extent—nay, we have had the experience in some years of having an increased duty accompanied by increased consumption, so far as I remember. I can say positively that the carrying out of this policy has failed to put an effective check on intemperance.

3. In trying to promote temperance I would first direct my attention to trying to keep school-going children away from spirituous liquor when they reach mature age, by impressing upon their young and impressionable minds the evil effects on the health of and the social degradation of and the miserable and distressful condition of the families dependent on, drunkards, by occasional exhibition, not less than once a year, of magic lantern films on the subject. This can conveniently be done by Assistant Deputy Educational Inspectors, whose number has lately been considerably increased and some of whom are already provided with magic lanterns and large numbers of films, but amongst which, I understand, the films depicting evils of the habit of drink are conspicuous by their absence. Drunkenness is such an inveterable habit that it is most difficult, almost hopeless, to wean drunkards from it. I have known several highly intelligent and educated young men, useful members of society, knowingly killing themselves by drinking spirituous liquor, because they could not resist the impulse in spite of the entreaties of their dearest relatives weeping by their bedside. In my respectful opinion, Government may well give up the hope of making drunkards temperate by adopting revenue measures short of prohibition of the manufacture and sale of liquor.

4. I am in favour of gradual total prohibition. I consider it to be a practical measure, if properly and carefully worked. The steps I would suggest for carrying it out are :—

(1) To close ten per cent. of the country liquor shops, excepting tree booths, in each district every year.

(2) To reduce the sales of country liquor at each licensed shop each year by ten per cent. of the preceding year's sales by restricting issues every month to that extent.

By this means, I am respectfully of opinion that consumers of liquor will necessarily get gradually accustomed to smaller consumption and in ten years' time it will be possible to prohibit the manufacture, import, possession and sale of country liquor altogether.

5. I would meet the objections usually urged against the adoption of prohibition in the following way :—

(*a*) The facility of manufacturing liquor by illicit means will be no greater then than it is now. It is only in isolated and unfrequented places that such distillation is practised without detection. The production of bhang, ganja and even of opium is rendered very profitable by the imposition of heavy duties upon it and these drugs can be very easily produced by cultivators in their out-of-the-way fields and gardens, but experience has shown that they do not generally do so. This fear need not therefore deter Government from enforcing gradual prohibition.

---

* Did not appear for oral evidence.

(*b*) It has been found that Indian States and the Portuguese Government have been following the Excise policy of the British Indian Government, and it may be hoped that in the matter of prohibition also they will follow it. The Excise establishments in Indian States are so inadequate and underpaid that ample opportunities exist for illicit manufacture and smuggling, but they are not resorted to to any considerable extent. The transport of Caju liquor from Sawantwadi State and Portuguese territory, which adjoin this district in several directions, is forbidden and, though Caju liquor is allowed to be manufactured in both these territories and though it is greatly valued for its reputed medicinal properties, statistics do not show that much Caju liquor is smuggled from these territories. In my respectful opinion, the proximity of Indian States and of Portuguese territory will not affect prohibition to a considerable extent.

(*c*) I do not think that the customs and habits of certain classes who are given to drink will come in the way of gradual prohibition ; for such classes are often times known to pass rules through their caste panchayets not to drink for certain reasons and to observe such rules with perfect equanimity. Some of these classes, such as Kharwas, do not, as a rule, drink spirituous liquor but fresh toddy only, and I think that if fresh toddy and tea are made available to these classes, these will be found by them sufficient refreshers after hard work, and they will be content and ultimately thankful to Government for the change ; for fresh toddy is both a refresher and food.

(*d*) The preventive establishment required to be employed to enforce prohibition need not be larger than at present. Excise offences are generally detected on information supplied by informants and they will continue to be similarly detected. If all touring officers of the Excise, Police, Revenue, Educational and Public Works Department are authorized to take cognizance of excise offences, a large staff can be made available for the purpose. As regards the possible demoralization of Excise officers, all I can say is that it is the duty of the head of the Department and of the higher officers to see that only educated men of good breeding and of good families are appointed to Excise Inspector's posts, the salaries of which are now quite adequate to attract such men, and to exercise such control over them as to keep them straight and honest. It will be easier to do this if touring officers of different Departments are empowered to take cognizance of excise offences.

(*e*) In my respectful opinion there is no probability of this happening ; for, on the special occasions like Holi and Mohorram, when liquor shops are closed and the masses are in a mood to resort to such intoxicants and drugs, the statistics do not show that it is done to any appreciable extent. From my experience I do not think that consumers of spirituous liquor in this Presidency are so depraved.

6. I think that prohibition can be effective in the present generation as mentioned above.

7. I think prohibition can be enforced by making the manufacture, possession, transport and import of spirituous liquor intended for drink, and not as a medicinal preparation, a penal offence under the Abkari Act.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to all distilled spirituous liquor. I would not apply it to toddy or shindi, even if fermented, but I would not allow toddy or shindi to be sold except on the day on which it is drawn.

9. My answer under No. 4 is applicable to this question.

10. I do not think that any of the means suggested in this question will be sufficiently effective.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of local option and consider that such option should be exercised through a Committee consisting of the principal Revenue officer in the taluka, the principal magistrate in the taluka, the principal Police officer in the taluka, three members of the local municipality elected by the municipality, three members of the taluka local board elected by the board and two members from principal villages in the taluka nominated by the Collector.

12. I would prefer that the power of determining the number and location of shops in the aluka should be exercised by an independent committee as mentioned in No. 11.

13. The existing Advisory Committees can be useful institutions if their members take interest in their work and their suggestions are properly considered.

14. From my experience I have found that the evil of drink contributes to an increase in crime, such as assaults, hurt and petty thefts, and causes want of steadiness and laxity in work in those who drink heavily.

15. All possible sources of revenue having been already carefully ransacked and fully tapped only recently, it is not possible to suggest any additional taxation on an already overburdened population. A fairly large saving can be made by reducing the present excessively heavy expenditure on administration in the various branches of Government service. About a crore of rupees can probably be saved in this manner annually. Consumption of toddy and shindi will largely increase when the consumption of spirituous liquor is stopped, and the tax on it can be increased by about 25 per cent. This may bring in about a crore of rupees. As the

excise revenue of 3 to 4 crores mentioned in the note probably includes the revenue from toddy and shindi, the net loss from total prohibition may be about one and a half crore annually. When the military expenditure of the country, which even the London *Times* admits to be largely excessive in peace time, is reduced as expected, a larger contribution from the Government of India to Provincial Governments may be expected, and it may be possible to make up the loss.

16. I am respectfully of opinion that the use of opium and bhang should be permitted under restrictions and the use of ganja should be stopped.

17. Within my experience opium mixed with other ingredients and made into pills called bal-golees (infant pills) is administered to infants by mothers of labouring and cultivating classes to keep the infants quiet while the mothers are away from home for work. If the pills are carefully made and contain a proper portion of opium in each pill, which is not always the case, no harm is caused by the administration of such pills. If an excessive quantity of opium happens to be given, which happens sometimes but rarely, it has necessarily a serious result. The death-rate among children owing to this cause is inappreciable—perhaps one in a thousand.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) V. M. MORAY.

## No. 139.

### Replies of Mr. Ig. D'MONTE,* Member, Taluka Local Board, North Salsette.

1. I am a landed proprietor. The opportunities I have had in forming my opinion on the subject are the constant touch with the people in the whole of Salsette.

2. The policy of Government in the expression that it has "No desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation" would have appeared a sensible one, if a definition was given to the term "moderation". Moderation could rightly be only spoken of those who imbibe alcoholic drinks keeping within the limits that contribute to the useful effects being derived without allowing the individual to get beyond that limit and enter upon that stage producing effects which can be considered injurious.

Government did not surely view "moderation" in the above light, but only drew an imaginary line between heavy and light drinkers, who entered on the stage of intoxication on the one hand and those heavy and light drinkers that could still behave as gentlemen.

I should have congratulated Government if the policy of non-interference was only confined to those that drank sufficient to keep body and mind healthy and kept within the limits considered desirable by the sanitarians all the world over. If my conjecture is right as enunciated in paragraph 2, the policy of non-interference was a decided failure.

To minimise temptation to those who do not drink sounds ridiculous or as ridiculous as closing of all wells to prevent all sane people who would never dream of suicide from drowning themselves and putting an end to their contented existence. Environment and society are the only effective means of improving or ruining an individual, and without these two essentials any attempt at discouragement to drink, especially for one who is accustomed, is doomed to failure.

Raising the tax does not improve the situation especially for one who cannot do without his quota of liquor daily. The wealthy will have no difficulty in purchasing his stock, the middle class will keep visiting his friends or borrow the wherewithal or steal, if he cannot get sufficient funds for the purpose; the poor man will necessarily save, if he can, by stinting his food supply and clothing for him and his family to meet the funds to quench his appetite or fish out for other sources, criminal or otherwise, or take to other intoxicants to meet their craving.

Illicit production of liquor can only be practised by a few. Vigilance and drastic steps in specific cases would prove a deterrent, and the production escaping notice would be comparatively insignificant in quantity. Limiting the number of liquor shops, etc., will have no effect, unless the quantity sold out every day is also limited and just sufficient to meet the daily requirements of moderate drinking persons. The quality should also be pure.

3. My suggestions are that the policy should have for its bases the following considerations:—(1) The physiological action of alcohol, (2) the experience of its use and abuse, and (3) moral considerations.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition in spite of the fact that moral considerations sorely demand it.

5. I favour neither total nor partial prohibition; good results must and will necessarily accrue from persistence in (*a*) educating the public—the masses in particular, (*b*) in improving their environments and housing. The achievement of these two essentials will more than combat or overcome the difficulties enumerated under objections (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), (*d*) and (*e*).

6. I do not support this—it may just be the reverse.

7. The end to be aimed at is not the complete cessation of liquor. We must make every drinker a moderate drinker so as not to trespass the useful limits of alcohol and this could be obtained by improving the environment of the public in general and the masses in particular and by educating them.

8. I would apply the principle of prohibition to no liquors at all, provided they conform to the underproof requirements of the Act. I would not prohibit the use of *pure* toddy or shindi.

9. *Vide* 7.

10. I would agree to (*a*), (*f*) and (*h*) to (*k*), not to the others.

11, 12 and 13. I would favour local option by the Advisory Committees. These committees should have wider powers and should meet oftener. They should determine the number and location of shops and the local needs. They should also be made responsible for the raising of revenues and the mode of raising. For the last two years I have been on two committees but up to now only one has met once. No serious discussion was ever entered into. It seems to me to be only nominal.

14. It is a patent fact and needs no examination that the evil of excessive drinking contributes to increase of crime.

---

* Did not appear for oral evidence.

*Its effects on work.*—Mental work. It is uncertain whether alcohol really increases mental power. It may for a time work more rapidly. Ideas, for the time being, may be more plentiful but it is questionable whether the power of clear, consecutive and continuous reasoning is not always lessened. It is doubtful whether the brain finds in alcohol food which by itself can aid in mental work.

*Physical work.*—In most persons alcohol appears to act at once, lessening also the rapidity of impressions, the power of thought and the perfection of senses. In other cases it seems to cause increased rapidity of thought and excites imagination, but even here the power of control over a train of thoughts is lessened. That it does affect the output of work may be gauged from the above. I do not think this applies to moderate drinkers.

15. Increase duty on all imports into the country.

16 and 17. I have no special remarks to offer. Enough has been said both in the press, on the platform and the children welfare centres about the deleterious effects of administering opium to infants and I feel that very nearly 75 per cent. of the deaths amongst infants are due to the administration of this pernicious stuff. This is found generally among the labouring classes as well as mill and factory hands.

No. 140,

REPLIES of MAJOR C. FERNANDES,* M.L.C., of Bombay.

*Question 1.*—I have been a medical practitioner for over 28 years, enjoying extensive practice among all communities in Bombay and have thus had ample opportunities of observing the evil effects of alcoholic drinks on those who indulge in it.

*Question 2.*—The excise policy of Government as laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India dated 7th September 1905 is apparently sound in theory but, as the results show, difficult to carry out in practice. The criticism has been made, I believe justly, that during the past fifteen years Government have not been able to take any effective measure "to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and discourage excess among those who do." I entertain great doubt whether any effective step in that direction can possibly be taken so long as Government is anxious to provide facilities for those who drink in moderation. In my judgment, since there will be moderate drinkers at all times until drink is totally prohibited, no scheme for controlling the consumption of liquor has any chance of success unless it contemplates the denial of facilities for the moderate drinker too at least after a certain period. I am of opinion that the policy of Government has failed to prevent intemperance even to the smallest extent. This is evident from the fact that despite the frequent rise in the price of liquor the consumption has gone on steadily increasing.

*Questions 3 and 4.*—I propose to deal with these two questions together. I am in favour of total prohibition, because I believe that the drink habit is a definite evil, which ought to be suppressed as soon as practicable. I accept the view that alcohol is a poison which produces deleterious effects on the different organs of the body. All authorities are agreed that its effects on the nervous system are anything but good. It makes the system more susceptible to disease and less amenable to treatment. It weakens the will power and other faculties of the brain and increases the proneness to fall an easy prey to temptation. Several cases of epilepsy, insanity, paralysis and such other nervous diseases have been traced to indulgence in alcohol, while much unhappiness and misery in quite a number of households are known to have been brought on by the intemperate habits of the breadwinners or other members of families. The baneful effects of alcohol on the progeny of those who drink are also among its worst features. From the economic standpoint too there is nothing to be said in its favour. In big industrial towns where the wages are comparatively high, the amount spent on liquor may conceivably bear a small proportion to the amount of wages earned but there is reason to believe that in rural areas it constitutes a great drain on the slender resources of the peasant. Further it is well known that drink goes a great way in stimulating improvident and wasteful habits so largely responsible for the ruination of entire families.

It is claimed for alcohol that it aids digestion when taken in small quantities just before or during meals. Granting that this is so the cumulative effect on the nervous system is far from salutary. Another virtue attributed to drink is its exhilarating effect which, it is said, is so very welcome after a hard day's labour. The exhilaration, however, is only temporary and is followed by depression and a craving for fresh quantity of the stimulant. I hold that alcohol is bound to be eventually harmful even when taken in moderation. The system does not need it at all, though in given circumstances it might make a grateful drink. In recent years medical men are making less and less use of it in the treatment of disease, since the seemingly stimulating effects produced by it are invariably succeeded by depression.

I do not feel the least hesitation in thinking that material prosperity and moral uplift are bound to follow in the wake of prohibition. According to some, prohibition has failed in America but the weight and volume of opinion is on the other side. It must be noted in this connection that the Americans have not adopted thorough prohibition as we desire it here. They have prohibited merely the sale of alcohol leaving it still open to individuals to have distilleries at their residences for their private use—which circumstance allows a large loophole for smuggling and illicit sale of liquor. What we want here in India is an entire discontinuance of not merely the sale but also the manufacture of liquor. Conditions in America again are so different from those in India that the alleged failure of prohibition in the former country would not be relevant in considering measures for India. Fortunately for us the religions of the two principal communities of India, Hindus and Mahomedans, prohibit the drinking of spirituous liquors. It is only a small proportion of the whole population in this country that indulges in drink. The voice of the nation is unmistakably in favour of prohibition and Government would be failing in its duty if it did not adopt measures to carry it out.

With regard to the several objections made against prohibition, I will say that I have no desire to minimise their importance but would urge that they are not so insuperable as they are represented to be. No new measure has ever been carried out without some difficulty, great or small, being encountered. Looking to the immense advantages of prohibition it would be worth our while to make any sacrifice to achieve it and no difficulties should deter us from our purpose. Besides the suggested difficulties would lose much of their seriousness if prohibition is carried out, not at once, but by stages. What I suggest is that prohibition must be accepted

* Did not appear for oral evidence

as a goal to be reached within a stated period (not exceeding 15 years) and adequate steps should be taken from now to reduce the consumption of liquor gradually and steadily so that at the end of the stated period it would be easy to enforce total prohibition. I understand that a system of rationing shops has been recently inaugurated in some parts of the Presidency. I desire that this should be made general, for that constitutes a great step forward towards reducing the consumption of liquor and would under proper conditions suffice to accomplish the object in view, namely, total prohibition. In addition to this with a view to check intemperance and also to minimise temptation to those who do not drink, I would try what is styled the "coupon system" under which liquor not exceeding the prescribed maximum would be sold only to those who hold coupons previously distributed by the authorities. The enquiry held as a preliminary to the distribution of tickets and the registration of the names of the coupon-holders will in all probability restrain many people from indulging in drink.

The enforcement of prohibition by gradual steps has two advantages :— (1) the reduction in the excise revenue will be gradual and the financial difficulties that might arise in consequence will be easier of solution. It will be generally admitted that the present is not an opportune time for the introduction of wholesale prohibition since such a course would land us in serious financial difficulty. (2) Those who drink in moderation will be less disposed to oppose the measure. If the restrictions indicated above are put into effect, there ought to be a gradual diminution in the number of persons now indulging in drink so that when total prohibition comes to be enforced it will be comparatively a small number of persons that will be affected by it.

In making my recommendations about total prohibition, I do not wish to be unmindful of the serious inconvenience which Europeans would feel by that measure. Coming as they do from a cold climate, where the effects of alcohol are less pronounced than in the tropics, they carry with them the generally prevalent notion that alcohol in small quantities is a beneficial drink. If possible I would not like to interfere with their habits and I would be willing to provide facilities for them, if that can be done without danger or detriment to our general programme of prohibition. I think it may be possible for Government to control the import of foreign liquors and arrange for their sale through specified agencies, such as European clubs and restaurants who would agree to be bound by the obligation not to sell or serve liquor to non-Europeans. For lack of Departmental experience, I do not venture to formulate details of the suggested arrangement, but I do hope that an experienced officer of the Department might be able to do this satisfactorily.

*Question 5.*—(*a*), (*b*) *and* (*d*). With the reduction in the number of drinkers (which I expect will take place when prohibition comes to be enforced), the cases of illicit distillation and smuggling are not likely to be numerous. A preventive establishment will of course be necessary until the passing of the present generation of drinkers. This is however a lesser evil and must be faced in view of the material and most moral benefits that are bound to flow from prohibition.

*Question 5.*—(*c*) It is customary to use wine in connection with certain religious ceremonies among Roman Catholics. As it forms an essential part of the ceremony, the use of wine cannot possibly be dispensed with. Adequate provision can however be made for this purpose in consultation with head of the Diocese in each province, who can be depended upon in preventing abuse of the wine supplied. I am not aware of any similar custom prevailing in any other community. It may be the case that certain communities have been addicted to drink for generations, but the customs and habits of these people are obviously opposed to the precepts of their religion and also to the sentiment and spirit of the nation as a whole. Government can and ought to deal with them as they have dealt with other nefarious customs. Should discontent however arise it would be confind to a small portion of the whole population and can therefore be met without the least difficulty, since the country would almost in one voice back up the Government in any measures needed in this behalf.

*Question 6.*—I agree with the opinion that prohibition, although it might not be wholly effective in the present generation (in the sense that recourse will be had to illicit or smuggled liquors or other intoxicants), will have a large influence on the next.

*Question 7.*—I suppose that prohibitive legislation furnishes the only means to enforce prohibition. I am not able to suggest any other alternative.

*Question 8.*—I would apply the principle of prohibition to all liquors, whether distilled or fermented, including even *toddy* and *shindi*. I do not share the opinion that *toddy* and *shindi* should be treated as standing on a different footing. These contain alcohol and are therefore harmful although in a lesser degree. It is only fresh and unfermented *toddy* collected in a clean vessel (daily renovated) that is beneficial to health.

*Question 10.*—(*a*) I regard this as the most effective way of reducing the consumption of liquor. I would insist that the supplies sanctioned for each shop should be reduced every year by at least ten per cent. of the quantity supplied in the previous year.

(*b*) I do not regard this as a potent means of controlling consumption. If at all, the effect would be very slight.

(*c*), (*d*), (*e*) and (*f*) I approve of these means but they assume quite a secondary importance when rationing of shops and the coupon system are brought into effect.

(*g*) The importation and sale of foreign liquors must of course be restricted. I have already recommended that facilities be provided for Europeans. When total prohibition comes into force, the use of foreign liquors by non-Europeans must also be prohibited, except for medical purposes.

(*h*) I do not know what these licenses are.

(*i*) I suggest that liquor should not be sold to persons below 20 years of age.

(*j*) Cheap literature in the vernacular on the subject of temperance is a great necessity. I would favour the subsidising of temperance associations for the express purpose of bringing out cheap *pamphlets* and books in order that they may reach every home in the country. I think it is the duty of Government to educate the people with regard to the evils of drink. The subject may appropriately form part of the curriculum for the higher standards in schools.

(*k*) This expedient is of doubtful efficacy. I would rather discourage drinking at shops. Alcohol taken at meal time is less harmful than when taken on empty stomach hours before meals. It is very common for those who drink at shops to do so several hours before meals, while it is a practice for many moderate drinkers to carry the liquor home and drink it at meal time. Restrictions on the removal of liquor from shops will affect the latter class, which is not desirable.

*Question 11.*—The drinkers are in a minority everywhere in this country. Therefore, if I concede local option, I would give the vote only to the person who drinks. In such a case I would attach no condition such as the one indicated in the next question.

*Question 12.*—There should be no objection to investing with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas, subject to the condition that they raise that part of the revenue which would be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers in their areas. The condition is very essential, as providing a safeguard against an indiscriminate exercise of the powers conceded to the bodies.

*Question 13.*—I have had no experience of Advisory Committees and have therefore no desire to offer any remarks on the subject.

*Question 14.*—Much evidence has been brought forward in every country that drink contributes to an increase in crime in an appreciably large measure and that it has an adverse effect on the output of work as well.

*Question 15.*—If my recommendations are accepted, the loss in excise revenue would be only gradual. The necessity of levying a new tax or raising any of the present taxes might therefore not even arise. The receipts from stamps, irrigation, forests, etc., may be fairly expected to increase year after year. The forests, if properly managed, ought to be a source of increasing revenue. Forest industries, hitherto neglected, must be taken up as early as practicable, as these are likely to add much to the revenue. An all-round retrenchment of expenditure in all Departments, which is now under consideration, ought to result in an appreciable saving. Finally there is the suggestion of Mr. Bell, late Director of Industries, that industrial alcohol (for which there ought to be a good market here and elsewhere) can be manufactured with advantage from *mhowra* flowers and other raw material which are now used in the manufacture of liquor.

*Question 16.*—I am of opinion that the use of opium and hemp must be prohibited, save for medical purposes.

*Question 17.*—The custom of giving opium to young children is, to my knowledge, prevalent among the lower classes. The motive for administration in the majority of cases is to lull the children into sleep while the mothers go out to work. So far as I know the custom does share responsibility in increasing the death-rate among the children in question. Opium, as is well known, greatly interferes with digestion and nutrition.

## No. 141.

### Replies of Mr. V. E. KARANDIKAR,* Honorary Secretary, Public Interests Committee, Poona.

1. I have been a worker amongst the uneducated and depressed classes in Madras from 1913 to 1921 December, chiefly engaged in educative and social propaganda. I have been an Honorary Treasurer of the Poor Schools Society of Madras and the Honorary Secretary of the Public Interests Committees in Madras and in Poona. As the latter I have had special opportunities of doing temperance work in the slums of Madras and since January last I have taken occasion to visit many of the slums in Poona City in order to investigate the situation there.

2. I do not subscribe to the view that vice should be permitted because it is indulged in only moderately. Drinking is a vice and in ninety-nine cases out of hundred, once a person takes to it, it is impossible to restrict one's self to moderate quantities. I, therefore, totally dissent from the view that it is the duty of Government " to make due provision for the needs of such persons " who " use alcohol in moderation". I believe that it is misconception of the responsibilities of Government that led to this curious definition of the Government's Excise policy. Since 1905, it is well known that this policy has totally failed to restrict the consumption of liquor and practically ended in raising the revenues from this service. I do not think that the only alternative to alcohol is either drugs or a more harmful form of liquor. My personal experience has shown that a healthier atmosphere created for the uneducated or the working classes leads to gradual abstinence from drink. So, I totally differ from this policy because I believe it has not been well thought out, nor it is based upon sound reason. The policy has entirely failed to put in an effective check on intemperance and no reasonable person could even have expected it to do so.

3. I feel that Government should have nothing to do with the trade in spirits in any way, except so far as absolute prohibition is concerned, which ought to be rigorously carried out.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition and I base my opinion on two different sets of arguments. I believe first of all in the total removal as far as practicable of all temptations of alcohol. In course of time, I am of opinion that the craving for alcohol will die out a natural death, if we take care to stop all trade in alcoholic drinks. To my mind, it is the duty of every civilised Government to eradicate totally this craving for drink. It can be done if opportunities for such indulgence in drink are not offered, as they are offered under the present system. The other line of argument I would advance in favour of prohibition is the moral one. I would not like any Government to take upon itself the moral responsibility of having helped in the ruin of thousands of homes every year by their indirect method of allowing promiscuous drinking. If I may, I would like to place an analogy before the Committee. It is well known that some people are in the habit of resorting to prostitution *in moderation.* " Will it be necessary " in the opinion of Government " to make due provision for the needs of such persons " ? Fortunately we find that the Government has taken quite the opposite view and in the laws against " White Slave Traffic ", the traffic in girls in India, the prevention of the muralis we see depicted their firm policy against the encouragement of such vices. It is, therefore, essential that even so far as Excise is concerned the Government should take an equally firm stand.

5. (*a*) I quite admit that it is possible to obtain liquor by illicit means, but this also can be stopped by strengthening the Police. It will form part of the preventive work of that Department.

(*b*) Now that we have got the means of approaching the Indian Chiefs directly through the Chamber of Princes, it would not be difficult to induce them to accept the same policy. The same thing cannot be applied to the Portuguese territory and we shall have to face the same difficulties as the United States have to face on the Mexican border. But that is not sufficient reason to postpone prohibition in British India.

(*c*) The Government have never allowed " the customs and habits of certain classes " to come in the way of carrying out reforms, and " the possibility of serious discontent " is a thing which the Government have been used to face with more or less equanimity. Besides, in taking such step, the Government will certainly have the backing of the cultured citizens. The case of the prevention of muralis is a very useful illustration in this connection.

(*d*) We have heard from various official sources that the Police Department has done very efficient work. It will not be bad to entrust this delicate task to that Department also. There need arise no danger of increased temptations and this objection need not stand.

(*e*) The people may take to other intoxicant drugs, but few are as harmful as liquor. Even then it will not be impossible to eradicate other evils. But we must make a real solid effort somewhere.

I agree with those who hold that prohibition will have a large influence on the next generation, if not in the present. I would like to point out that formerly there was not much of drinking in India. There is conclusive evidence to that effect officially recorded before the Royal

*Did not appear for oral evidence.

Commission in 1813. It would not be difficult to revert back again to that stage, within the course of a generation or two, if stern efforts are made.

7. Prohibition, I consider, to be the chief thing. But to be effective there ought to be an active support from the cultured citizens. Efforts must be made to evoke such active support from the people and wherever it is forthcoming, we must go out of our way to encourage it. I have great faith in propaganda and the starting of counter-attractions. I believe night schools, magic lantern lectures, bhajan parties, kathas, concerts, etc., will be of great use.

8. I would not object for the first few years to the use of shindi or toddy. But we must definitely settle a time limit in which to put it down.

9, 10 and 11. As I am in favour of absolute prohibition, the question does not arise. All these methods as suggested are useful and good to a certain extent and are preferable if prohibition is disapproved of. But when and if we decide on prohibition there is no need to take to any of these. In any case encouragement of temperance work would be an important factor in reducing drinking.

12. As an *interim* measure, I would suggest the investing of local bodies with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their area and they may be asked to make good the revenue sacrificed.

13. I have no idea of the working of the Advisory Committees and so I cannot say anything as to their utility.

14. I am emphatically of opinion that drink contributes to an increase in crime and at my suggestion, in Madras, liquor sale was prohibited in the disturbed areas in that town for a few days.

15. I would like to distribute the loss due to stopping the liquor trade on land, stamps and irrigation. I would suggest the working of prohibition in a limited area for a year or two in order to gather experience. I have been able to meet a few representative gentlemen from the Satara District and believe that if prohibition is applied to Satara, we shall have the full co-operation of the leaders of the district in making it successful. I would be prepared to carry on a propaganda work in the municipal areas in that district in order to induce these bodies to make up the deficit. With the co-operation of the officials it would not be difficult to do the same in the Local Boards also. It would not be difficult even to raise the rest of the deficit from other sources like land revenue. Perhaps legislative action will have to be taken in connection with empowering these special cesses, by the Government, the Local Boards and municipalities.

16 and 17. I have no definite remarks to offer in this connection.

## No. 142.

### Replies of Mr. HARIBHAI GOPALJI DESAI,* late Senior Mamlatdar and First Class Magistrate.

1. I was in the Revenue Department in the Northern Division of the Bombay Presidency from 1887 to 1910, and had served from a karkun on Rs. 30 to a Senior Mamlatdar and First Class Magistrate. I come from the Surat District—one of the largest liquor and toddy consuming districts of the Bombay Presidency—and had served in all the Districts of the Division, including Surat, the Panch Mahals, Kaira and Thana. I had thus ample opportunities to study the Abkari policy and to observe its effects.

2. The policy laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001-Exc. of 7th September 1905 must have been laid down with the best of intentions. It would have been better had Government invited the opinion of the public, especially of those who reside in the country and small towns. As it is, the inhabitants of big cities, however well educated, well intentioned and well informed they may be, know very little about the habits, customs and conditions of the teeming millions of the village population of India. Without any real knowledge of the interior, they have honestly helped the enactment of laws in all directions, which actually tell on the daily and hourly life of the illiterate villagers. About 30 years ago these villagers were quite simple and law abiding. If any of them distilled liquor or drew toddy without a license, the police patel at once arrested him, and in 99 cases out of 100 the offender admitted the offence. The harshness of law gave rein to the designing middlemen, who to serve their own ends or interests, poured poison into the simple hearts of these illiterate persons and taught them how to evade law and commit offences. Before the advent of the British Government, no high caste Hindus, except the Rajputs, ever took liquor, as their religion prohibits the use thereof, as there were no facilities then and especially as the social customs sternly prohibited any use thereof. As the holy Koran of the Mahomedans has quite distinct orders with respect to liquor, the Mahomedans never touched it. The Excise policy worked by the executive officers has changed everything. It has killed public voice outright and has irreparably destroyed all the bonds of society. The elders in a village used to guide all communities. That system is now dead. The younger generation has broken loose and has overridden the older one. It is for Government to find out the root cause of these radical and, to a certain extent, vicious changes. The Excise policy of Government has much to do with some of these undesirable changes. Those at the helm have all along been thinking that raising the price of alcohol will check its consumption. My experience and opinion are that the consumption, instead of being checked, has been accelerated. I have not the figures before me: But this much I know that young men in almost all the communities and scions of all the known families have been found to have acquired the habit of drinking. The resolution of the Government of India means well but in practice small attention is being paid to the spirit of it or to public opinion. The actual results of the policy are that it has ruined the poor consumers of alcohol and enriched the liquor and toddy contractors and shopkeepers and, let me respectfully submit, the Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors and menials of the Excise Department. Soon after the resolution under reference was issued high posts of Sub-Inspectors and Inspectors, ranging from Rs. 60 to 300 per mensem, were created and filled by special selection from Europeans, Eurasians, Parsis and here and there, in very rare cases, by Mahomedans and Hindus. If there was really an intention of checking and reducing consumption, there was no necessity to create such high posts and, if created, for filling them with persons having no scruples against liquor and toddy (especially in this Presidency). The Government of India proposed that the number of liquor shops should be restricted as far as possible. Inquiries will, however, prove that the reduction of insignificant shops would not affect the sales or affect the habits. On the other hand, it always appears as if care is always taken, while reducing the shops, hardly one or two in a taluka, to see that the sale of liquor as well as the revenue may not suffer. Government considered it very important that the liquor offered for sale should be of good quality. But the supply of liquor made by Messrs. Carew and Co., to whom a manufacturing license was granted by the Bombay Government, had raised a great hue and cry among the liquor consumers about the badness of the stuff; and, if I am rightly informed, in spite of urgent protests, little or no heed was paid to it by Government.

3. I may be allowed to submit that I advocate a wholesale change in the Excise policy so as gradually to lead to complete prohibition of liquor except as medicine.

(*a*) The whole liquor and toddy department may be abolished and the administration handed over to the Revenue Department. The Revenue Department has become so much law-bound that nowadays the Collectors have, really speaking, very little work to do. When I entered the service in 1887, I saw that the Collector was, during the fair season, always out in the mornings inquiring about the condition of his people, and, in the afternoons, he regularly attended to the work in his office. He made it a point to write out all the English correspondence himself, kept a vigilant watch over the work of his subordinates and tried to know personally not only his subordinates in the district, but also the leading inhabitants thereof. All that is gone. Almost every Collector has a Personal

*Did not appear for oral evidence.

Assistant now, and still the work suffers. Justice, if given, has become very slow and costly, and the people have lost their reverence for the officers. They do not see *that* sympathy and care as in bygone days, and they have naturally become callous, fretful and insolent. Ask a simple villager if he would like a European or a native officer to be the Collector of his district and he will say that a European is far better. But the stiffness of the administration has driven them to bay. The people are really pining for their Hopes, Barrodailes, Reids, Hadows and others of the old natural type. A Collector can, without the help of the Personal Assistant, manage with his Assistants and Deputies all the departments of his district excluding the Salt and Forest Departments. If the cadre of the whole Revenue Department is minutely scrutinized, with the help of well intentioned, clever and honest Mamlatdars and Deputy Collectors, a great saving may be made, and after that with the addition of a small staff to his Department the Collector can manage the Excise Department.

(*b*) Liquor shops as they exist at present should be completely done away with. With the help of the people Government should fix twelve places in a big taluka, at the most, and six in a small one, where liquor depôts should be opened ; pure liquor, whose strength should be fixed, should be kept ready in sealed bottles for sale in these depôts. The Committee should fix either liberal commission or a good salary to the men to be engaged in these depôts. No one customer may have more than a pint of liquor in a day. The gallon bottles may be sold only to those who produce a certificate either from the punch or from the police patel or any other person or persons so empowered by Government or by the Committee ; and that too on occasions of festivities or marriages or deaths. No person should be allowed to drink at or in the vicinity of the shop. The hours for sale should be 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.

(*c*) In the area, town or village where such depôts are opened, a punch of not more than five persons and not less than three of approved intelligence, honesty and loyalty should be appointed in consultation with the people and, where the police or revenue patel is intelligent and of approved ability, he may be included. The present system of appointment of the patels in the Presidency has dragged them down from the position of the leaders of the villagers. The punch should be empowered to visit the shops and decide complaints, and where the latter are serious, to report them to the Mamlatdar with their opinion.

(*d*) Government should erect their own distilleries for the manufacture of good and wholesome liquor. A complete recast of the Abkari policy on these lines will obviate the necessity of the employment of such a big staff, will drive away corruption and dishonesty from the business, will force the people to be temperate and thus enable them to save and live contentedly.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition. The system may be so arranged that it may lead to total prohibition within five or seven years. The climate of this country is more or less tropical all the year round. It is proved that intemperate use of even simple tea, without nourishing food, has ruined many robust constitutions. With very few exceptions, it is easy to mark out from obvious outward signs the person addicted to liquor. Both the Hindu and the Islamic religions have put a ban on the use of liquor. Can it not be that the strict enjoinment in the Koran on its followers not to use liquor in any form must have some bearing on the very hot climate of Arabia, where it was first promulgated ? Besides, the use of country liquor in almost all the communities, high and low, Hindu and Mahomedan, has brought the country's morals to the present state, and has landed a greater part of the consumers to a condition of utter starvation and even nudity. The most appalling result is that it has practically ruined India's greatest asset—agriculture. I have no patience to describe my reasons in words. But I honestly ascribe most of the national calamities of India to the habit of drink. If Government, with the co-operation of persons in the know, succeed in completely prohibiting drink in this country, they will have done an unlimited good to their subjects. It may not be considered a practical measure, though I think it is, but nothing is impossible before the efforts of men, especially of such a mighty Government with such vast resources.

5. I am confident that the alcohol using illiterate people of India can be gradually led to complete prohibition. Of course, some efforts shall have to be made before tangible results are obtained. Anybody will easily admit that too many facilities have induced the populace to take to this injurious and ruinous habit. Most of the illiterate people consuming liquor will leave off the habit if they are informed that Government does not like that they should drink. The picketing movement persuaded many to give up the habit and many abstained from it for months together. Of course, there are many objections urged against the policy of prohibition. But that policy is bound to succeed in this country though it may not be feasible in other countries. Religious scruples are responsible for the abstinence of a majority of the upper class people. If Government back these scruples, which are getting slack and let the public voice assert itself, it will prove a great help towards entire prohibition, and will also help the upper classes to regain their hold on the lower, so that the art of agriculture will be improved and made a sound national asset. Any wholesome or advantageous scheme can be worked to perfection if Government appoint a punch in every village, consisting of respectable

people and not of sycophants and flatterers. This will surely create public opinion and will lift the illiterate masses from darkness. They say Bhavnagar State has adopted prohibition in the State with very good success.

(*a*) Whenever temperance has been pressed upon Government, the first objection that is brought against it is extensive illicit distillation. My experience as a Revenue officer and a Magistrate has led me to believe that in many parts of Gujarat illicit distillation is very insignificant and that it is not worth the money spent by Government on their vast, unnecessary and highly paid establishment. Instead, a punch should be appointed in every village and town and made responsible for illicit distillation. At present, out of every five cases of detection more than three are false, manœuvred by the department to show the utility of their existence. The remaining two are also doubtful and owe their conviction to the inability of the accused to prove their innocence. The resolution ostensibly says that prices are raised to check intemperance. On the other hand, the view of the department is that the shortage in sales proves extensive illicit distillation. The shopkeepers and servants who show extensive sales are considered very efficient. Every Collector and Excise Assistant Collector tries his best to get the highest auction fees for every shop. These and other such measures adopted to throw the country into liquor consumption quite nullify the good intentions of Government, put on paper. In fact, the Excise policy of the Bombay Government has impoverished the lower classes as a whole, and some of the middle and upper classes too ; and at the same time it has enriched the shopkeepers and the servants in the Department. If the Committee will look at the *bethak* fees (fees for shop-license) for shops in big cities, in strategic villages and at other places of advantage, and then compute the duty on the liquor supplied to such shops, they will surely wonder why the shopkeepers keep the shops at all, because no gain will apparently be found therefrom. But the secret is, the close combination of the shopkeepers and the servants of the Department enables the former to loot their illiterate and tipsy customers. Under the present system they are at liberty to charge any price for their liquor. There is none to see whether they give short measures or whether they sell adulterated stuff. They often break every rule provided by Government as a check. Thus they will be found selling liquor at any time during day or night. They sell it openly to minors. They sell it on credit. The Abkari officers request them to send their carriages when they want to visit their shops. They even go to the length of borrowing money from them and coming under their obligation in hundreds of ways. Will they, placed as they are, be able to detect and bring to light the irregularities and crimes of the shopkeepers ? In fact, a liquor shopkeeper is, under the present system, a master in the village, whereas he was a pariah in the old regimes, hated and shunned by respectable and temperate people. Kalals (liquor shopkeepers) and butchers were men without any countenance. That is all changed. To speak honestly and candidly, I have known these Abkari shopkeepers to be the only men of means in many of the villages. Their connection with the officials, coupled with this, makes them really dangerous as far as the internal affairs of a village are concerned. It is they who make and unmake quarrels, and under the warmth of official favour and countenance, they do not hesitate to ruin the reputation of many a respectable person. The less said about these shopkeepers, the better. I am, therefore, firmly of opinion that the present Abkari policy should be dealt a blow at the root, if Government are desirous of bringing peace and prosperity to this country. Persons of irreproachable character should be appointed as punch, among whom a well paid police patel may be included as a member. Every case of illicit distillation must be made penal and a heavy sentence of imprisonment and fine should be prescribed for such offenders. Rewards should be given to informants or detectors of such offences. If a community is found incorrigibly bad in respect of these offences, a punitive police should be established at their cost, after due notice is given. The police patel and revenue officers should be encouraged to do their duty properly in this respect. These and such other measures will surely, gradually and completely, stamp out distillation from towns and villages ; because in spite of all tall talk, the drinking population of India has been rendered quite timid and spiritless, as will be seen from the ease and fearlessness with which open day dacoities are committed by a few armed dacoits in thickly populated towns and villages, like Koth in the Dholka Taluka.

It is not necessary to distil liquor from palm-tree juice. The juice, if well fermented in sour vessels, is more intoxicating than liquor, and from my answer to question 8 the Committee will find that I am out and out for the allowance of free or slightly taxed toddy. I am confident Government will receive hearty co-operation and assistance from all the respectable people of all communities in stamping out this evil from the land. They need only have the will and the means will be found easily.

(*b*) I sincerely believe that the policy of Indian States in all their departments is dependent wholly and solely on that of the British Government in India. The British laws, with very slight changes, are in force in all these Indian States. The day on which complete prohibition is established in their territory by the British Government, they will not find a single Indian State with an Excise policy in its territory. When an alien Government is inclined to prohibition, out of purely benevolent motives, I am sure the Indian States will

change their policy accordingly, or else their subjects will force them to do so. It is a different question with regard to the Portuguese territory. The cordon, with the severe administration of law, will, in my opinion, check this nuisance. However, better heads may suggest better ways to remedy this evil. But the same cordon may do for Excise as for Salt.

(*c*) Had not the picketing movement been checked by Government to safeguard the interests of the shopkeepers, this evil would have been sufficiently checked to give a death blow to the habit of drink, as all communities, except a few, were whole-heartedly supporting the movement. The prohibition movement would have received a great impetus. I can say from my knowledge of the province that there will not be any discontent in the province of Gujarat. The coolies and Indian Christians of the Thana District are held to be the greatest consumers of liquor. But when bad stuff was supplied to them by the Carew Company, most of them left it off for months together as a protest, and there was, to my knowledge, no or little rise in the offences of illicit distillation. I know that in the regime of the Carew Company it very often happened that the shops were not regularly supplied with their requirements and that they had to be closed for days together as I saw it happen in the Bulsar Taluka very often that year (about four years back), and still there was no open discontent or revolt among the liquor consuming public. I, therefore, stick to my belief that if Government is willing to forego this evil and degrading revenue, they can easily be able to stamp out this evil within ten years at the most, by effectual curtailment in the strength, quality, quantity and facility of the supply of liquor.

(*d*) I have treated this question in the body of my answers to other questions and leave it to be thoroughly threshed out by wiser and more experienced heads. My belief is that the Government Abkari Establishment had, if any, a small share in the prevention of illicit distillation. On the other hand, to gain cheap notoriety and win the favour of Government, the department were instrumental in the enactment of the much hated Mhowra Act, notwithstanding the fact that mhowras are a source of very wholesome food to human beings and cattle as well. Minute inquiries should be made as to how many cases of illicit distillation were detected during the last five years, after the passing of this Act, and whether the sale of liquor has increased since then. While passing a law which deprived thousands of people of their daily food, Government did not fear any opposition. Why then should they have any doubt regarding public feeling when such a question as the total prohibition of alcohol comes in ? Moreover, people will be entitled to have their cheap mhowra food, in case the prohibition movement is put in force.

(*e*) Other intoxicants are not named in the question. Opium, *ganja*, *charas* and *bhang* are the other intoxicants used in Gujarat. Cocaine is hard to get, and is obtainable by the well-to-do people only. The policy regarding these is not objected to, as it is sufficiently harsh and has succeeded in reducing the consumption of the same. This can be seen from the statistics of the sales. But these intoxicants are quite different from liquor, and, if once weaned from liquor and toddy, the lower classes cannot easily take to these.

6. I have answered this question above. I can only say here that the habit of drinking on a frightful scale has kept the lower classes quite illiterate and ignorant—at a time when civilisation has all along been running very high in almost every other country—has stunted their growth and has sown disease among them, so that they are being depopulated day by day. Those addicted to drink paid a frightful toll to the epidemic of influenza in 1918. Whole villages were devastated in forest areas and those parts of the districts inhabited by the Kaliparaj (lower classes). It is not an uncommon sight to see a drunkard lying in the streets and it is equally common that these people are robbed of all the valuables they have on their persons. To me it seems that nearly 5 out of every 10 persons who are addicted to this habit have some time or the other found themselves robbed in this way. I have myself seen such cases. Coupled with this the roguery of the shop-keepers and the cupidity of the officers are sufficient to starve the liquor consumers. It is now high time that Government must see to the welfare of these poor people and save them from degradation and penury.

7. I have said that prohibition cannot be brought about at one stroke of the pen. People must be made to know the good intentions of Government and must be coaxed into decreasing the habit, by making liquor less accessible and by persuasion, as well as by some legal measures to open their eyes. I honestly believe that the scheme which I have described above, if honestly administered, will bring about the desired results.

8. I have no knowledge of the breweries of the world nor of the various beverages. But it is for the Committee to find out a wholesome drug to take the place of this harmful liquor. If Government once take upon themselves the gradual decrease in the consumption of alcohol leading to complete prohibition, there will be ample time to think of other beverages to replace liquor. I am strongly for the use of toddy, unadulterated and fresh from the tree or a day old. If taken fresh, I am given to understand that it proves to be a nourishing food. Many respectable and sober Parsi gentlemen will testify to its having many medicinal properties. It

is my opinion that the Excise policy of Government has not only affected the agriculture of the Presidency, but that it has totally ruined the palm or shindi groves of Gujarat. Nearly every good cultivator in the province of Gujarat, and especially the Surat District, had a number of shindis (date palm trees) on his land. His servants tapped two or three every year, maintained their families on the toddy and a handful of cheap grain and served their masters contentedly. Some officers, among whom were Messrs. Pritchard and Lely, thought of taxing these trees. A very slight tax, say, two annas per tree was levied on each such tree used by the servants. Of course, the master paid it. The tax went on increasing, and to obtain a larger amount of juice the servants pierced the trees deeper than usual, killing many of them. The masters naturally grew careless. The result is that very few respectable cultivators have these trees on their lands and the remote consequence is that the lower classes have no allurement to serve under such masters. The best rice, sugarcane and garden lands are thus turned into vast areas of grass growing *jarayat* lands. It is very difficult for cultivators to find field labourers and the produce of grain has suffered. Prosperity of the country cannot be judged by the pomp and glitter of big cities like Bombay and Ahmedabad. The ruin of the villages, which is half accomplished, may eventually ruin the cities by starving them. More attention should, therefore, be paid to the needs and condition of the rural population as is the case in all civilised agricultural countries. The Excise policy of Government is one of the causes which have brought the villages to the brink of ruin and utter poverty. To find out the truth of this statement I would suggest that the Excise Committee should select a village in every District and make minute inquiries into its economic condition. It is my belief that the advisers of Government, being mostly inhabitants of cities and many of whom being selected from the legal profession, have very little first-hand knowledge of village economics and are totally ignorant of their daily life. If Government have a mind to improve the condition of the village communities, they must make toddy available to the cultivators and inhabitants of villages, free and gratis. As it is, toddy is as dear as liquor and all the rules governing the sale thereof are infringed one way or the other. It is very rarely sold pure. Unless it is seasoned, toddy is not highly intoxicating. But I have heard of cases where it is purposely seasoned in a special earthen vessel before it is sold. This is absolutely against the rules. It is a rule that owners of tree foot booths should sell toddy at two annas per five seers. But they charge according to the demand, and as they are always kept informed of the intended visits of the officers, they invariably manage to show them a clean slate. I, therefore, request the Committee to make toddy very cheap or free for the cultivators and their servants (because it is a nutritive food), and to promulgate a scheme for taxing the toddy sold to customers and consumers in bottles at a fixed rate. At any rate, the cultivators should be encouraged to grow these trees.

9. Already answered:

10. (*a*) Rationing the shops will not reduce consumption. Government must manage the shops themselves with the help of the punch and a paid servant and deal out liquor in sealed bottles ; one bottle of a pint per every person above twenty-five years of age, every day.

(*b*) Government have tried it and have failed in achieving the desired object.

(*c*) Already recommended. They should be few and far between in central places.

(*d*) Already recommended. Liquor should never be allowed to be sold after 8 p.m. No drinking should be allowed in a shop.

(*e*) It is extremely desirable to decrease the strength of liquor gradually.

(*f*) Answered.

(*g*) Restriction on the importation of foreign liquor is also extremely desirable. The duty should be raised as high as possible so that it may not remain easily available to people of limited means. A limited number of licenses should be issued to persons in big towns whose population may not be less than 50,000 souls.

(*h*) Answered.

(*i*) Answered.

(*j*) If Government will honestly help all temperance societies and movements, sternly prohibiting any interference from subordinate servants and menials, the evil will be stamped out very speedily.

(*k*) Answered.

11. The answers embody my opinion.

12. I cannot be made to believe that municipalities and local boards are bodies independent of Government. They are in every respect subordinate to the parent. The question in my opinion is quite redundant. Government shall have to compensate itself for the loss of excise revenue, if complete or part prohibition succeeds. The arms of Government are long and with the help and advice of their councils and councillors they can recoup the loss, unless they persist in continuing the present expenditure which, every sane man must admit, has grown top-heavy and unbearable. Leading personalities should be consulted and all new departments, created or extended during the last 25 years, should be curtailed or done away with as is found

desirable or expedient. For this purpose the help and advice of the well-known men of the country will be found very useful. There are some departments which can be curtailed or abolished without detriment to the administration. Why should local bodies be saddled with the duty of raising any part of the revenues which may be lost, if a prohibition scheme is decided upon ? Government is powerful enough to raise it from any territory under them.

13. No sound work has been shown by the advisory committees. In many cases they are not even known to the general public. It is for Government to see if they have proved of any advantage from their point of view. I honestly doubt if all the members appointed in such committees have full knowledge of the subject they are meant to handle. They are meant to know the whole subject when appointed by Government. A vast change is required in the constitution. My humble opinion is that only such men, who have the courage of conviction and who are fully conversant with the subject they are meant to investigate and report upon, and who have also the feeling of responsibility of their true position, should be impartially selected and posted on such committees.

14. It is an open secret that drink is the father of crime in its most hideous form, and it is drink which is solely responsible for the appalling increase of crime. I am a teetotaller and am hence unable to give my opinion whether alcohol in any form gives more energy and impetus to the labourers to put in a greater amount of work than they usually do. Discreet persons say that it is quite the contrary. Others say that if moderately used it helps to lessen the fatigue of hard work. Those, among Indians, addicted to drink, except some Parsis, do not know what moderation is. The consequence is that they are made unfit to work within a short time and that they have to lead a life of poverty and wretchedness, not to say anything about their shattered constitutions.

15. If the appalling waste of public money on drink can be saved by them by a statute, Government are welcome to increase a little the duty on Salt or any other necessary article, to compensate themselves.

16. Opium and hemp drugs are being stamped out of the country by their dearness. The fact is that these drugs were generally used by the higher classes of society. The spread of education and the evil consequences suffered by many respectable people have opened the eyes of the consumers, and it is hoped that the evil will be completely arrested, if the present policy is adhered to. The percentage of liquor consumers and those addicted to other drugs is hardly 100 to 1. Under these circumstances, there are few remarks to offer on this subject.

17. Administering opium to infants is not a custom, in any sense of the term. It is only occasionally administered, and that too under medical advice. As far as I know of it, I can say that opium thus administered to infants is quite a negligible quantity, since it is mixed with other herbs, and has seldom been found to do any harm.

No. 143.

REPLIES OF MR. GOPAL CHIMNAJI BHATE, M.L.C., MEMBER, THE EXCISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, ROHA (KOLABA DISTRICT).

1. The Excise Committee, Roha Taluka of the Kolaba District.

2. (*a*) So far as the policy underlying the Government of India's Resolution referred to in this question does not touch the main policy of prohibition, we do not approve of it.

(*b*) Much is to be desired of the results of the policy. It cannot be said that it has put an effective check on intemperance.

3. Replies to the following questions will be a sufficient reply to this question so far it goes. At this stage it can be said that a change is necessary and that it must be based on the principle that the goal to be reached should be prohibition.

4. The goal should be total prohibition. Very few of the principal reasons would be—

(*a*) it aims at the longevity of life,
(*b*) encourages thriftiness,
(*c*) diminishes crimes,
(*d*) improves manhood in general, both materially and morally.

It is a practical measure in so far as gradual success to reach the ultimate goal is borne in mind; no sudden big jump can be suggested but the steps would be those which are to be advocated for the reduction of consumption, etc., as suggested below.

5. (*a*) If this objection is based upon the financial point of view, the reply to it would then be, we need not give much consideration to it. If the moral point of view is at its basis, then improved ideas of society will themselves act as a check on the illicit production of liquor.

From the administrative point of view the present law with further amendments, if any, would meet the case sufficiently.

(*b*) The action in British India will have its own results even in Indian States and Portuguese territory. However, the present preventive measures will have to be improved.

(*c*) No undue importance need be given to the customs and habits that are in vogue now. We want to remove the evil of drink and a bold and courageous stand is necessary in this respect. Whatever the scheme may ultimately be laid down, it will have to be introduced cautiously and carefully.

(*d*) The present machinery of the Police, Forest and Revenue Departments can very well be utilised to secure the end. These with the present preventive establishment, well-reorganised, will cope with the work.

(*e*) We shall think of the probability after the prohibition of liquor is effectively brought into force. If great stress is to be laid on this probability, then no beginning can ever be contemplated. But it can be safely said that because a man accustomed to take liquor will take to opium if he does not get it, it is not a probability.

6. The reply to it will be an emphatic yes.

7. Prohibitive legislation is one of the means but not the only means. To it must be added—

(*a*) penal measures,
(*b*) educative means,
(*c*) control over foreign trade.

8. We would apply the principle first to distilled liquor and then to fermented. We would prohibit the use of toddy or shindhi even, but gradually. This object of prohibiting distilled liquor first is that in the case of toddy it is available only during 8 months of the year. This itself will reduce consumption of fermented liquor also in this part of the country.

9. Absolute prohibition is desirable but not feasible all at once.

10. Except in the case of (*b*) and (*c*) we approve of all the means suggested in this question. To this we wish to add that the following innovation should be introduced in all the shops, *viz.*, the customer's name must be registered at each time of the sale. Now to go to particulars. A distinction should be made by the license in the case of hard working classes and others at the time of the sale. Because the former class may require liquor by way of relief, while in the case of the latter no such seeming reason can be assigned for the drink.

(*a*) We entirely approve of this rationing but there should be a limit fixed as to the price to be charged by the licensee, as the licensee will raise the price to make up his loss over the rationed quantity. He will say to the customer as the supply rationed is exhausted he will see his way to sell some if higher price is offered.

(*b*) We have no faith in this means. It has not checked the consumption.

(*c*) This must be done as far it can go.

(*d*) Days must be reduced. All holidays of all castes, creeds and religions. Hours will also have to be changed, *e.g.*, the drink time is the evening after work is finished and so, if the shops are closed by that time, it will act as a deterrent.

(*e*) It is also a very doubtful point. We entertain grave doubts about its utility. On the contrary this reduction will give a great opening to foreign liquor, which will be going from bad to worse.

(*f*) No special remarks necessary.

(*g*) We would strongly advocate the policy underlying.

(*h*) The policy underlying is approved.

(*i*) Age limit should be raised to 21.

(*j*) Encouragement as far as possible ; cinema films and other shows, etc., should also be encouraged. Even best literary productions should be encouraged.

(*k*) It should be strictly enforced. There should be regulations for the prevention of annoyance to others. There should be a fixed scale as regards the quantity which each should purchase for drink.

11. Yes. The latter portion of the question can be answered on the basis of rural and urban population.

12. Yes. As regards the latter part the several local bodies would naturally be willing to contribute, if any contribution is at all necessary on account of the loss of revenue.

13. So far as their constitution is concerned the Committees have done some useful work, but it is quite necessary that some real power of control should be given and thus allow it to show some constructive work.

14. Yes, labour is said to be " alert and efficient " on sober days. Drink is resorted to only after work, and not before work.

15. Retrenchment of the top-heavy administration would bring in more than sufficient to make up the loss.

Sources of taxation would be—

(*a*) Heavy duty on foreign liquor.

(*b*) Duty on luxurious articles of all kinds.

16. In the case of these drugs also the system of registering the names of customers should be introduced.

17. The custom referred is not so much in vogue here though it is noticeable in the case of some poor families, where there is none to look after the children, and the elders, especially the mother, have to leave home for their bread. No appreciable effect on the death-rate among children. Among various classes this custom has some effect as it produces chronic complaint of constipation.

No. 144.

REPLIES OF MR. DOSABHOY MANECKJI, PRESIDENT, SATARA CITY MUNICIPALITY.

1. I am a pleader practising in the Satara District for over 25 years; I have been a Councillor of the Satara City Municipality for over 30 years; I had been the agent of the Abkari farmer of this district for 9 years (1887—1896); and hence I can speak with some knowledge on matters Abkari.

2. In my opinion the policy laid down by Government is wise and far-sighted and calculated to bring about reduction in the sale of liquor. The actual results have justified the policy.

3. I would suggest that the price of country liquor should not be raised too high as it might tend to illicit distillation; nor should it be brought on a level with that of Europe manufactured liquors. There should be a sufficient margin between the two.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition. People who are used to drink shall resort to illicit distillation or will take to other injurious drugs. Liquor is also used as medicine by some people. I consider Government have no business to interfere with the habit especially of those who use drink in moderation.

5. No answer is necessary in view of answer 4.

6. In my opinion total prohibition is absolutely impracticable on the whole as stated in answer 4. Although some prophets and preachers condemned it ages ago, the habit of drink still prevails amongst some of its followers.

7. In view of my replies above, no answer is needed.

8. In view of my replies above, no answer is needed.

9. The means stated in the Resolution of the Government of India quoted below question 2 will serve the desired end.

10. These are some of the means to discourage and minimise the habit of drink. But no means calculated to annoy or insult the people or to curtail their personal liberty should be allowed.

11. I do not believe in local option. I would suggest that liquor shops should not be located in crowded localities but should be in remote corners or at the ends of towns and villages, so that the neighbours should have no cause to grumble if they do not like the vicinity of these shops.

12. Local bodies should be consulted regarding the location of shops. They should not be held responsible for any loss in revenue and hence they may not be given any power in determining the number of shops.

13. I cannot say.

14. I do not think so.

15. Not necessary.

16. They too should be restricted.

17. The habit of giving opium to children as is done in this district amongst the cultivators and working classes should be discouraged. I cannot say how far this habit affects the death-rate amongst children.

No.

REPLIES OF MR. V. A. COELHO, PRESIDENT, DISTRICT LOCAL BOARD, KANARA.

1. I was a coffee planter in Mysore and a Government forest contractor in Kanara for many years, a municipal councillor for twelve years, and a member of the Taluka Local Board, Karwar, and District Local Board, Kanara, for nearly seventeen years, a Vice-president of the Taluka Local Board for five years and am at present, being a timber merchant and commission agent, the first non-official President of the District Local Board, Kanara, and also an honorary magistrate of the Karwar Bench. In the above capacities, for a period extending over 46 years, I met with several opportunities to form a settled opinion on excise matters.

2. (*a*) The policy of Government, laid down in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance Department, no. 5001, dated 7th September 1905, is quite agreeable to me inasmuch as it is harmless to the public, except in cases of persons given to excess drink, who are a minority.

(*b*) The actual results of this policy were wholesome to a great extent as the system provided for the needs of those who use alcohol in moderation, giving at the same time a decent income to Government, the surplus of which is generally assigned for education. It may be said that this policy has to a certain extent put an effective check on intemperance.

3. I do not see any change is necessary in this policy.

4. I am not in favour of total prohibition for the obvious reason that it is impracticable and that it will create discontent among the hard working classes, as they require the same as a stimulant to refresh themselves after hard fatigue.

5. No answer is necessary in view of the reply given against no. 4.

6. I believe that total prohibition would lead to illicit manufacture of liquor and other obnoxious drugs and use thereof.

7. I do not consider that there should be complete cessation of the consumption of alcoholic liquor as it will be required by many in moderation for the benefit of their health and for domestic medicinal purposes, especially when epidemics are prevailing. The mhowra liquor sold at present is most injurious to the human constitution. The reintroduction of cocoanut toddy liquor would be more beneficial to health.

8. The principle of prohibition may not be applied in the case of liquors distilled or fermented. I am not in favour of applying the principle of prohibition to the use of "toddy" or "shindi" which is harmless and is nutritious and which also serves as a beverage or food among certain classes of people. If toddy is encouraged, many will be addicted to this harmless drink, giving up alcoholic drinks; but toddy must be made available freely.

9. I would suggest that advisory representative committees may be framed for controlling the consumption of liquor and gradually to reduce it by fixing limited time for sale and reducing the strength.

10. (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The present price is high enough.
(*c*) Yes.
(*d*) Yes.
(*e*) Yes.
(*f*) Yes.
(*g*) No.
(*h*) Yes.
(*i*) Yes.
(*j*) Yes.
(*k*) No.

11. I am not in favour of the principle of local option.

12. The local bodies are predominated by Brahmins and therefore the power of determining the number and location of shops may vest in Government.

13. Only recently advisory committees have been framed in the head-quarters stations of talukas. It is hoped that they will prove to be useful.

14. The evil of excessive drink causes disturbance during fairs where a number of people gather but this can be checked. Moderate drinking has some effect on the output of work.

15. I am not in favour of any reduction or absolute extinction of the excise revenue, as it will also be a source of income to local bodies if local cess is levied on it as on land revenue.

16. I have no remarks to offer.

17. The custom of giving opium to children is not prevalent in this district.

No.

REPLIES OF MR. S. S. SHASTRI, B.A., LL.B., VAKIL, HONAVAR.

1. I am a pleader in the Honavar Sub-Court and my profession brings me into contact with persons of all sorts and conditions of life in this taluk. Recently I have joined the Congress party and suspended my practice and have been touring over many parts of the taluk and some parts of the district also.

2. (*a*) I think the Indian Government has failed to take note of the broad fact that it is governing an eastern people who regard the habit of drinking as a great sin from a religious point of view, and a people who were, until the advent of the British Government, not addicted to drinking generally. In this view, the policy enunciated in the Resolution of the Government of India is entirely wrong, and the self-complacency with which it regards moderation in the use of alcohol as desirable is really pitiable. Starting as it does with a false premise, the conclusion which it draws must necessarily be wrong.

(*b*) The actual results of this mischievous policy of the Indian Government are apparent in the increase of the drink habit so far as I see in my taluk. For example, half a century back, Haldipur, a village in this taluk, was almost free from this evil. I say almost, because, one in a thousand resorted to this habit in concealment out of very shame. Now the state of things is appalling. Fully a tenth of the population indulge freely in the habit, and that too without any restraint or sense of shame. I suppose this is the case with many other villages of this Kanara District.

As regards the effectiveness of checks placed by Government the less said the better. I see daily persons mainly of the industrial and agricultural classes coming home dead drunk and sometimes rolling in gutters or on road sides, or still worse abusing and ill-treating half starving wretched wives and children at home. Only self-conceited official reports can speak of effective checks by departmental rules.

3. Since I am for total prohibition I do not see the usefulness of a change in the present policy of Government which may be an improvement. I would have the whole system abolished at once. No patchwork can be of any use with regard to the evil which is eating into the vitals of the lower classes.

4. Yes. I am in favour of total prohibition. The main reason is that Indians were formerly a non-drinking people, that the drink habit is certainly of recent growth, and that it is neither impossible nor impracticable to make them again a non-drinking people. If the temptations of easily obtaining liquor or toddy be removed, it is certainly the easiest thing to make the drinking class renounce the habit for ever. The party to which I belong tried the experiment by picketing and imposing the check of public opinion for 2 or 3 months, and the results were marked. But the underhand scheming of the toddy contractors and the temptation of easily obtaining it by stealth and of the existence of booths, as it were near their very doors, were too strong for these poor wretches. I have not seen a class more docile than the working class people here. Those who say that it is not a practicable measure don't know the facts well. Let Government try it in any given area or locality as an experimental measure. The expense or loss is well worth the task.

There are many other reasons which are set out over and again by the press and platform. I don't repeat them; but in my opinion the one I have given above is enough to silence sceptics.

As regards the steps for carrying out total prohibition, I have not thought over them. Abler men than I may profitably solve this question.

5. The objections urged against prohibition are not insuperable. Some of them, *e.g.*, (*c*) and (*d*) are flimsy. The discontent of a certain section of the people can safely be ignored when the question is about the moral well-being of these very people, unless indeed a civilised Government cares more for the vices of a minority than for its virtues and moral condition. The objection that a preventive establishment will be necessary equally well applies to the Police Department. I think that the Police Department may well be asked to attend to this work also.

Now, the really deserving objections are (*a*) and (*b*). But with the gradual awakening of the masses and with the spread of education amongst them and the check of public opinion and local committees of influential men in villages and towns, it should not be difficult to materially diminish the chances of illicit traffic. We hear of many cases of offences against the Forest and Salt Acts in spite of Government officers and rules. Such exceptional cases may be safely disregarded in view of the magnitude of the good that will be gained.

(*b*) I don't see any great force in this objection. A small establishment will be necessary to guard the frontiers. I cannot understand what is meant by "neighbouring British districts." If total prohibition is effected, it should come into force throughout British India.

(*c*) As regards this I think the danger is from outside, *viz.*, from foreign countries. I don't know of any other drug which may be a substitute for the already existing numerous varieties

of liquor or toddy. It should not be difficult for Government to discover a remedy for any such drugs.

6. Since I believe that total prohibition will be immediately effective considering the nature of Indians, the question of the next generation may safely be left alone for the present.

7. I am of opinion that legislation is the best means to secure total prohibition. If Government shirks its responsibility then picketing will be the next best thing. So far as I see, these are the two methods, because want of education amongst these classes comes in the way of any other method of approaching them. I have some experience of picketing and I have seen the good results obtained thereby.

8. Certainly I would make no distinction between liquors distilled or fermented. Evil is an evil though it comes in a diluted form. Toddy is as bad as any other liquor, foreign or country, and the cheapness of toddy makes it still more dangerous.

9. The question does not arise as I am for total prohibition.

10. Some of these means are in the nature of stop gap arrangements and will not remove the root cause. However, I shall express my opinion on some of these, which are to some extent desirable in the present state of things.

(*a*) and (*b*) Both these means are useless; in the former case, the shop-keepers will freely adulterate the quality and in the latter, the additional burden will be thrown on the already wretched poverty-stricken drunkard, without substantially decreasing the sales or consumption.

(*c*) Reducing the number of shops is certainly the best means, as it will to a large extent remove the temptation of easy satisfaction of the craving.

(*d*) and (*e*) Those also are perfectly useless. If the days are reduced the drunkards will be more drunk on days open, and reducing the strength means adding more money to the pockets of the shop-keepers.

(*f*) This is a good remedy and I would favour it, provided the choice is left to local committees specially formed for the purpose of stopping the evil.

(*g*) and (*h*) I can't give any opinion on these. Departmental officers who have got experience of the working are better judges in regard to these.

(*i*) This is a very desirable rule and should be adopted, and the age limit should be raised to 21 years in all districts.

(*j*) In my view, this is unnecessary.

(*k*) I am not in a position to express any opinion on this point; nor am I prepared to make any constructive proposal on any of the items mentioned in no. 10.

11. Yes, I am in favour of local option. I have suggested above that local committees for this and other similar purposes should be formed and the work entrusted to them. This should not be a difficult task. I would even go so far as to suggest that, since in all important villages Congress committees are formed, this work may with advantage be entrusted to them. Public opinion has changed a good deal in favour of total prohibition at least in my taluk; and the local Congress committees are entirely responsible for this admirable result. I should have no hesitation in trusting them in this work.

12. I have answered this question partly in question no. 11 above. Failing Congress committees which are daily growing into power and influence, I would invest the municipalities and district or taluk boards with the power of determining the number and location of shops within their respective jurisdictions. These bodies will be entirely made up of elected members in the near future, and no better selection could be made.

The idea of making revenue out of an admitted evil is to be deprecated always. It is repugnant to the notions of Indians to make money out of sin. If other revenues are to be raised by these bodies as a substitute for the loss consequent on the abolition of the liquor trade, these bodies will lose all popularity and will be viewed with suspicion. I would have these bodies do this work as an entirely philanthrophic and elevating task; and to couple it with the notion of money-making machines will be to rob these bodies of all charm and grace. Let Government find some other instrument for raising money.

13. There are no Advisory Committees in my taluk, or in the district for the matter of that. This fact shows how far North Kanara is backward in these respects and how free scope is given to the drink evil to spread and multiply. In my opinion, the sooner these Advisory Committees are replaced by local bodies the better. Now-a-days people have come to look with suspicion on everything which savours of official influence.

14. Most emphatically yes. I thought this proposition needed no argument in support. The effect of drinking on the rural classes here is simply disastrous. We see it in lean bodies and skeleton-like frames of the labouring classes, and the number of crimes amongst these is as much attributable to this evil as it is to the want of education and the appalling poverty of these classes.

15. The net result of my recommendation will certainly be the total extinction of the Excise revenue. The question of finding some other sources of revenue to make up for the loss of this important source is a most difficult one. Because even the Government of India are at their wits end to raise revenues and must needs tax the poor man's salt and necessaries of life, as witness the recent Budget and the new taxation bills. With the growing poverty of the masses it is impossible to raise moneys from sources which touch the poor man's pocket at every step. All other directions are entirely closed in the provincial heads. The income-tax head is an Imperial revenue; but that is the only source now left to Government open. My idea is that Government should still more drastically cut down their expenditure on the costly and top-heavy administration. It is no use tinkering at the bottom with low-paid servants. And next, to ask the Indian Government to make over the Income-tax revenue to the Provincial Governments. I don't see any other way out of the difficulty.

16. No.

17. The custom referred to is non-existent in this taluk. Only a few amongst the better classes indulge in this habit; but these persons are grown up men.

No. 144.

REPLIES OF RAO BAHADUR RAGVENDRARAO K. KEMBHAVI, PRESIDENT, DISTRICT LOCAL BOARD, BIJAPUR.

1. My profession is that I am a pleader; I also own cloth and jewellery shops. I am a partner in an oil factory at Bijapur. I own several lands. From these various occupations I have had opportunities of forming my opinion on the questions that I have tried to answer below.

2. (*a*) My general opinion on the Excise policy is that it is not worked out in the spirit in which it is laid down. The principle of the policy is that Government have no desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation, but I believe Government is fully aware that moderation is hardly observed by those who attend the liquor shops. A man can buy six gallons at a time and if he uses the whole quantity and indulges in excess he loses consciousness. Drink habit is such that it could not have regard for moderation. A man moderate at first becomes a regular drunkard in the course of time. It becomes absolutely impossible for him to resist the temptation. With this view in mind I think it is meaningless to say that Government want to make due provision for the needs of moderate drunkards.

I also disagree with the opinion of Government that the vice can be minimised by raising the tax on liquor as high as possible. When once the habit ripens into vice it hardly has in sight the strength of the purse. I think there must be very few instances where a man has given up drinking because the price of liquor has gone high. The only effect of raising the price is that he who takes to drinking become a pauper too soon.

The restriction of the number of liquor shops is a good means no doubt, but the question is, is this principle given effect to ? I am sorry I have no figures before me, but I must say from the abnormal increase in the excise revenue of late that the idea of reduction of shops is kept entirely in the back ground.

(*b*) From the foregoing remarks I am constrained to say that the results of the policy laid down are inconsistant with its principles. I am sorry to say that it has not put any effective check on intemperance.

3. My suggestion for improving the evil are as follows :—

(1) Government must definitely lay down that liquor shops should be entirely abolished within a stated number of years, not more than 10.

(2) That the number of shops should be so reduced every year that the abolition would be complete within the said period.

(3) That the working hours of the shops should be so curtailed as to keep it open only for 2 or 3 hours a day, say, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

(4) That there should be no two shops within an area of 20 miles.

(5) That the opening of liquor shops in fairs should be stopped at once.

(6) That the strength of liquor should be reduced below 60 per cent. so that it may not enable a man to lose his conscience.

(7) That the quantity to be sold to an individual should not be more than one gallon per day.

(8) No person should be allowed to take liquor to his house.

(9) That liquor should not be sold to any person below 18 and more than 50.

4. I am in favour of total prohibition but not at once. It should be done gradually, say, within 5 to 10 years. If it is prohibited in course of time, I think the measure is practical. The steps that I have advocated above in answering question no. 3 would be enough to carry out my suggestion. It is admitted on all hands that the evils of liquor makes a man penniless. Generally, moderation is hardly observed and excess in drinking brings on several maladies and the man succumbs too early. These are some of the main reasons for prohibiting the drink vice totally.

5. The reasons advanced in clauses (*a*) and (*b*) will have to be coped with, no doubt, but it is my firm conviction that if Government is inclined to stop the evil it will surely devise means to cope with the situation. It is not an evil without a remedy. No doubt it will cost Government more for some time to prevent the mischief, but the money so spent will be spent usefully to eradicate the evil out of India. The money that will be saved by the people from this vice will add to their material prosperity which means the prosperity of the country. The fear of temptation on the part of the establishment to levy illegal exactions in such cases is a fear which exists more or less in all cases. What guarantee is there that the present staff in all Departments is free from this fear. Such things will continue, and it would be unwise not to adopt measures to put a stop to this vice because of this fear.

(*c*) I am the last person to believe that serious discontent will be caused if genuine attempts are made to stop the evil customs and habits of drink in the interests of the people. I don't

think Government attach serious importance to discontent among people caused by any such reasons. Why was suttee prohibited and why remarriage legalised.

(*d*) I have inquired into this point. In Bijapur liquor was short in the Depôt for about two weeks in 1920 or 1921 during that time the sale of *ganja* and opium did not increase. This shows that those who have taken to one sort of vice are not satisfied by using another intoxicant in its stead.

6. I am unable to answer this question.

7. Prohibitive legislation is one of the means for attaining the object of cessation of consumation of liquor. Rules framed by Government under the Abkari Act requiring the reduction of shops every year so as to reach the goal within a stated number of years would also serve the purpose. Attempts of such bodies as Social Service Leagues, etc., to induce people from not having recourse to this evil should be facilitated by Government.

8. Distilled liquor should be stopped entirely. Toddy or shindi may be allowed to such an extent only as would not make the man intemperate and unhealthy.

9. This question is answered in no. 3.

10. While answering question no. 3 I have referred to the remedies laid down in clauses (*a*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*), (*f*), (*i*) and (*k*). I have also referred to the remedy in clause (*j*) while answering question no. 7. I am entirely against the question of increasing the price of liquor. This is not the correct treatment of the malady. For the present the remedies above suggested would be quite enough to minimise the evil gradually.

11. I am in favour of the introduction of the principle of local option. It can be exercised by the public through village *panchayats* wherever they exist, or municipalities or taluka local boards.

12. I favour the suggestion of entrusting local bodies, *i.e.*, municipalities and district local boards, with the power of determining the number and location of shops in their respective areas. I am not in favour of making them responsible for raising any part of the revenues that would be sacrificed by the exercise of such powers in their areas.

13. I don't think the existing Advisory Committees have been found to be useful institutions. I propose they should be formed on elective bases. That Committees should consist of members elected by local bodies such as municipalities and taluka local boards and district local boards. Such Committees should have some substantial powers. Where the views of the Committee differs from the official view, the view of the former should prevail unless Government rules to the contrary.

14. The evil of drink leads to increase of petty crimes such as assaults, affrays, etc. I think those who drink to excess cannot do the same amount of work as a sober man would do.

15. The question implies that the Excise Department is organized to create a source of revenue. I think Government should not grudge a deficit in revenue when it will have the greatest consolation and credit of putting a stop to this evil. Of course, if there be a deficit in consequence of reduction of the excise revenue, it can be met by retrenchment elsewhere. If revenue is needed at all to meet the deficit, it can be made up by :—

(1) Reimposing tolls on all Provincial and Imperial roads.

(2) Imposing duties on foreign articles imported into India, which are now exempted, or increasing the existing duties on such articles.

(3) Or, by such other means as will not be felt by the poor.

No. 145.

GRANT ROAD.
Bombay, 23rd May 1923.

The President and Members of the Excise Committee,
Bombay.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit for your consideration a few replies to your questions a copy of which I received yesterday evening.

Unfortunately I had no time to study all the question with details of figures, as I should have desired to do. But still should you be pleased to enquire, I shall try to reply to the questions I have omitted below.

I may mention for your information that I contributed in December 1922 an article to the "Angelus" (a Catholic periodical in Bombay) on the subject of intemperance among Goans in Bombay. I have tried to prove therein by statistics that the community consisting of 42,000 consumed country liquor worth about Rs. 8,00,000.

I take great interest in temperance. (1) I am a retired book-keeper or accountant. (2) I have had many opportunities of observing the course the Government Excise policy is taking. In its object of not interfering with moderate drinker, and discouraging excess the policy does not appear to have succeeded to any appreciable extent; for the moderate drinker among the poor labourers, who takes a regular and measured quota either as a stimulant or an appetizer, has now in vast number of cases given up alcohol altogether since the price has been raised to a height which is not within his reach; while the habitual drunkard who is addicted to the vice satisfies his cravings and takes his fill by means which he obtains by hook or crook. Some of these habitual drunkards are to be seen daily at Chowpattee sea shore begging for alms which they spend in drinks.

If the objective of the Government policy has failed to give an impetus to temperance, it has eminently succeeded in raising an enormous revenue which according to the Resolution of 7th September 1905 was not and is not the aim of Government.

3 and 4. I advocate a change in the present policy by a gradual reduction of ten per cent. of the licences every year—at the end of ten years total prohibition of the sale of all liquors produced within, and imported from foreign countries. I also advocate prohibition of the sale of toddy and all other intoxicants. If this is done the economic condition of the poor and poorer classes will be vastly changed from bad to good; as also their morals and physique.

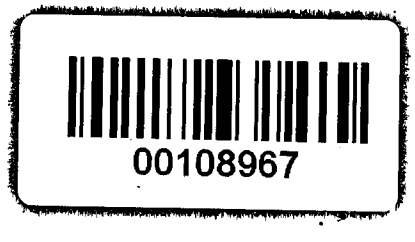
Prohibition is practical, and its success easy in a country like India where there is a religious prohibition against intoxicants to a vast majority of the people. If some have disregarded the religious prohibition, it is because the alluring temptations have been irresistible. Besides, prohibition is possible and its success attainable, if properly enforced, was proved during the picketing time in Bombay when the picketed shops lost by enormously reduced sales, and some of these shops were even practically deserted by their customers.

5. Illicit distillation is one of the stock arguments trotted out whenever there is a cry against intemperance and an agitation for prohibition. But illicit distillation runs great risks. While the juice is being distilled the whole neighbourhood is pervaded by the smell of the liquor, and such a smell rarely fails to reach the nortrils of the Excise people or the village patel. In most cases it is risked by a combination of a few of the very poor in a village, and that too not for sale, but for their own use, at all events any illicit distillation has not been known to continue for a month. But even if there are cases of illicit distillation, though few and far between, that is no reason why an organised system for the sale of alcohol should be maintained if that system so far has only helped to degrade people and increase crime.

15. It is much better to lose a revenue of say 4 crores of rupees annually rather than allow a decrease in morals, and increase in vice which are the only results of intemperance. But since an administration, and a very costly administration, has to be maintained, I would suggest that the Provincial contribution be discontinued to begin with towards making up for the loss by prohibition. Further, death duties may be raised. So also court fees and even stamps. Above all a further retrenchment of at least 10 per cent. be rigidly enforced in the civil and judicial administration. If all or any one of these suggestions are impracticable, and there is no other means of exercising economy, and a growth of revenue in a decade also fails us, in that case and as a last resort the gap may be filled up by borrowing; for it is far more honourable to be an honest debtor rather than bear the disgrace of intemperance and crime.

Yours faithfully,
D. X. DeSIQUEIRA.

BOMBAY: PRINTED AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRESS.


00108967

Digitized with financial assistance from

Government of Maharashtra

on 01 February, 2020